

5-1-1985

Evangelical Visitor - May, 1985 Vol. 98. No. 5

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Recommended Citation

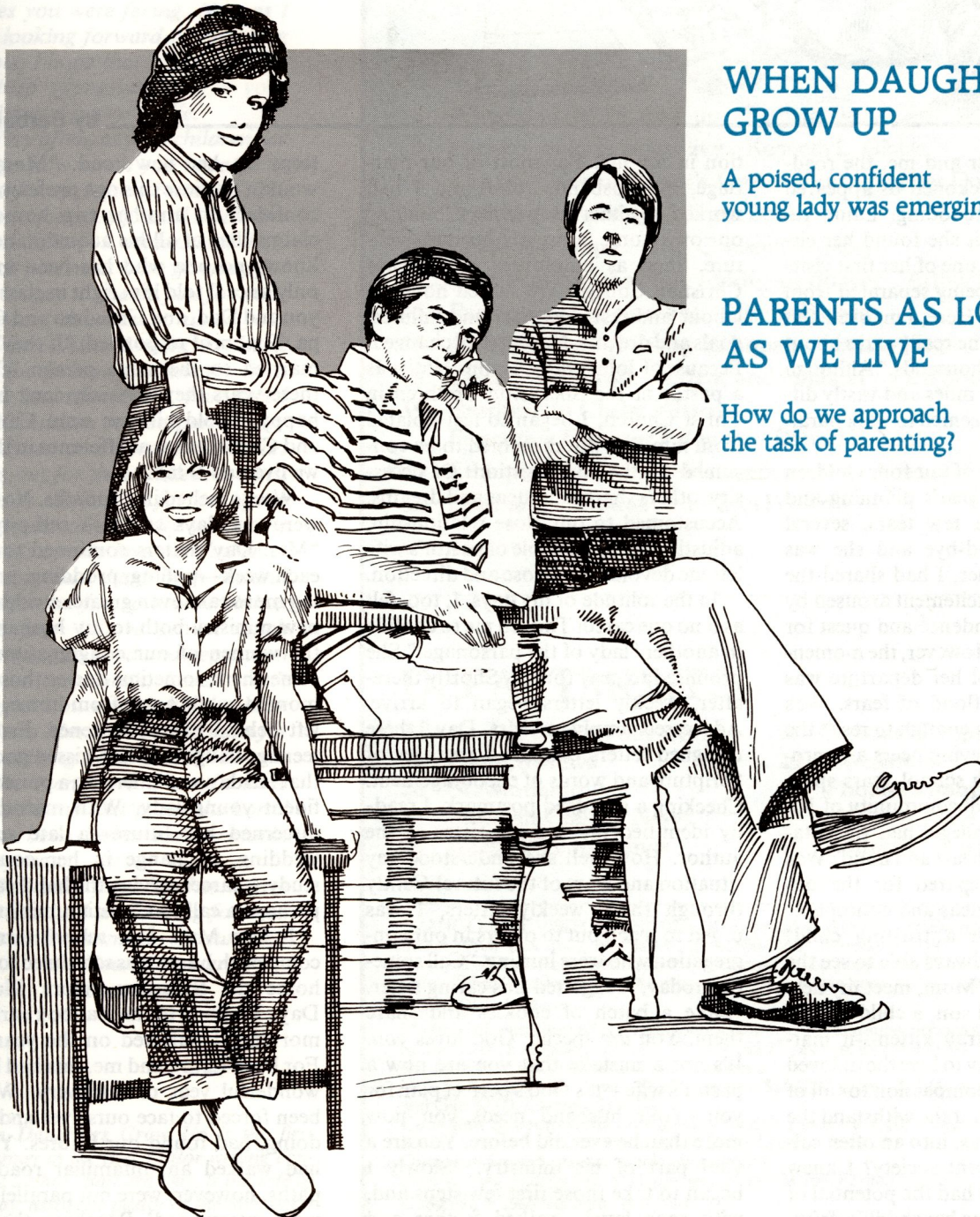
Pierce, Glen A., "Evangelical Visitor - May, 1985 Vol. 98. No. 5" (1985). *Evangelical Visitor (1887-1999)*. 2490.<https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor/2490>

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evangelical VISITOR

May 1985



WHEN DAUGHTERS GROW UP

A poised, confident
young lady was emerging

PARENTS AS LONG AS WE LIVE

How do we approach
the task of parenting?



When daughters grow up

by Barbara Day

For my daughter and me, the road-way of life that beckoned us appeared unfamiliar and foreboding. Laura revealed how difficult she found her circumstances during one of her first visits home. "It's tough being separated from family and friends. Here, I'm loved and secure. There, no one really cares about me. I'm just one in thousands." Although separated by many miles and vastly different settings, we seemed to walk parallel paths.

She was the first of our four children to leave home. A year's planning and preparation, not a few tears, several hugs, a wave good-bye and she was gone. As her mother, I had shared the anticipation and excitement aroused by her desired independence and quest for further schooling. However, the momentary exhilaration of her departure was soon erased by a flood of fears. Was Laura's faith strong enough to resist the pressures of unbelieving peers and professors? Those high school years spent within the 'sheltered' community of Niagara Christian College, had they stabilized her teenage heart and mind? Was she sufficiently prepared for the onslaught of secular ideas and concepts?

Laura was such a trusting child! Always believing, always able to see the good in everyone. "Mom, meet my new friend." A prodigal son, a child from a broken home, a stray kitten—it mattered not. This ability to love the unloved gave her a natural compassion for all of God's creation. Could she withstand the impact of being thrust into an often calloused and indifferent society? I knew this new experience had the potential of refining or destroying her childlike faith. Laura stood at the crossroads of her life!

I, likewise, had come to an intersec-

tion in my life. For most of our marriage, my husband, John, and I had worked together as partners: building our own home, a private business venture, then as employees of Niagara Christian College. We shared hours of labour and rest, successes and failures, goals and dreams. Now that all changed. Because of John's new responsibilities as a pastor at the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church, I began to feel isolated from him. His hours seemed to be consumed by the congregation. Of necessity, others shared his ideas and dreams. Accustomed to our close relationship, adjusting to my new role of pastor's wife left me devoid of purpose and direction.

In the solitude of my days, I, too, felt as if no one cared. This led me to confide in another "lady of the parsonage." She promised to pray for me. Shortly thereafter, weekly letters began to arrive. Addressed simply to "Mrs. Day," these unsigned letters contained passages of Scripture and words of encouragement. Checking a smudged postmark, I readily identified my praying sister as the author. How well she understood my situation and fears of the future! Gently through those weekly letters, I was urged to reach out to others in our congregation who were hurting. "Call someone today," suggested this caring sister. "Bake a batch of cookies and share them. You *are* special; God loves *you*. It's not a mistake that you are now a pastor's wife—it's God's perfect plan for you. Your husband needs you now more than he ever did before. You are a vital part of his ministry." Slowly I began to take those first few steps and, with each letter, walked farther and faster.

At the same time, Laura was taking

steps on her new road. "Mom, you wouldn't believe this one professor," she confided on another trip home. "He claims that of all his acquaintances, he knows no one who has been married only once. I told him right in class about you and Dad, and Grandma and Grandpa. That prof responded, 'If they're still married to the same person after all these years they certainly can't be very happy! I told him we were Christians and Christ makes a difference in the way we live and think.'"

Weeks melted into months. No longer were my days spent in self-pity. My "Mrs. Day" letters continued to arrive each week—pulling, prodding, prompting me to take even greater strides in my new ministry both to my husband and the women of our congregation. And somewhere, sometime during those same months, while away from home, Laura left behind her adolescence. From the teenage daughter I had kissed good-bye that fall day was emerging a poised, confident young lady. With maturity she discerned her future—a late summer wedding, a change in her course of study, a career serving the handicapped, perhaps a call to Christian ministry.

It was May. Her school term was completed. Laura was scheduled to arrive home the Saturday before Mother's Day. Walking to the mailbox early that morning, I reflected on the year past. For both Laura and me, this had been a wonderful year of discovery. We had been forced to face ourselves and, in so doing, had found our futures. Yes, we had walked an unfamiliar road. Our paths, however, were not parallel. They were intertwined! Reaching the mailbox, I pulled out my weekly "Mrs. Day" letter. "Oh, I really don't need these

anymore," I thought as I opened the envelope. "I wish I could tell my secret pal that I'm O.K. now." I read . . .

Mrs. Day,

This letter will be my last to you for quite sometime. I guess I should reveal to you my true identity. I am a student away at college, and one weekend when I was home, I was impressed by the Holy Spirit to write to you each week. I am very sorry for the secrecy, but I felt this was one way I could help you get through some of the hard times you were facing. Now as I am looking forward to returning home, I hope that I can continue to help strengthen you in your duties as a pastor's wife.

Very often, as your children, we forget how much you have sacrificed for us. I guess I was not fully aware of it myself, until I did leave home. Now I understand how much you must have given up for us. I want to thank you for your love and devotion to us as your children. Also, I want to thank you for the love you have for Dad. Time and time again, I am faced with children whose parents are separated or divorced. My heart cries out for these children. I just have to thank God for letting me be a part of a family where the parents openly love each other.

I also must thank both you and Dad for our fine spiritual training. This year I have grown much closer to the Lord and depend on him so very much. I really can't imagine how terrible life would be without him. If it hadn't been for the training I had as a child in the Bible, I am sure I would have drifted away. But 'praise the Lord,' I have been drawn closer to him in every way.

God bless you, Mother. I love you dearly. I am looking forward to returning home for the summer.

Your daughter,

Laura

When Daughters Grow Up is the first prize winner in the first *Visitor* writing contest. The author, Barbara Day, is the wife of John Day, associate pastor of the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church in Ontario, Canada. Other award-winning articles will appear in subsequent issues of the *Visitor*.

evangelical VISITOR

The official publication of the Brethren in Christ Church

May 1985

Vol. 98, No. 5

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EVANGELICAL VISITOR (ISSN 0745-0486) is published monthly by Evangel Press, 301 N. Elm Street (P.O. Box 166), Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Telephone (219) 773-3164. Member of Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse, a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New International Version. Editor: Glen A. Pierce

Mailing Information: All correspondence, manuscripts and subscriptions should be addressed to the Editor, Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Changes of address should include both the old and new addresses.

U.S. Subscriptions: 1 year—\$8.50; 2 years—\$15.00; 3 years—\$21.00; 5 years—\$33.00. New and Gift: \$7.00. Lifetime: \$130.00.

Canadian Subscriptions (in Canadian funds): 1 year—\$10.00; 2 years—\$18.00; 3 years—\$26.50; 5 years—\$41.00. New and Gift: \$8.50. Lifetime: \$160.00.

Overseas airmail rates available upon request.

Second-class postage paid at Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Printed in U.S.A.

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David Strickler

Parents as long as we live

by Kenneth L. Gible

"I'm not sure exactly when we realized it, but at some point my wife and I agreed that being parents to our children was probably going to be the single most important thing we would do in our lives."

Seated across the aisle from me, the man who said this was speaking with a new intensity now. We had begun our conversation when I made a comment about the book he was reading. At first our exchange was polite and casual, the kind of conversation I frequently have with fellow plane passengers. But then I explained to him that I planned to write an article about parenting—what it means to be a parent, appropriate goals for parents, how to know if you've achieved success, etc. What I'd like to learn from him, I said, was how he had approached the task of parenting. What had he set out to accomplish as a father?

Very quickly our dialogue took on a different tone. As this young father began to talk about the goals he and his wife had for their children, it became obvious the topic was deeply important to him. He told me of a decision he and his wife had made to attend a parent-training course offered in their com-

munity and of finding it so helpful that they took the same course a second time.

"Attending those classes made us realize how poorly we had been prepared to take on the responsibilities of parenthood. Isn't it amazing how little our society does to get people ready to be good mothers and fathers?" He shook his head somewhat sadly. "And it shows up too; many families in a constant state of upheaval. My wife and I learned some things that have been a big help to us."

One of the surprising discoveries I made as I talked with people about their experience as parents was their willingness, even eagerness, to talk about this intimate part of their lives to a complete stranger. "I've never been asked about this before," was a frequent comment. Not once did I find people reluctant to give thoughtful, honest answers to my questions. One young woman, still single, went even further.

"You know, I want to thank you for asking me about this subject," she said at the end of our conversation. "I've never thought about the kind of goals I'll want to have when I do become a mother. It's good to reflect on the values I hope to instill in my children."

Attempting to generalize about numerous conversations with parents is difficult because, even though most parents wanted the same kinds of things for their children—a good education, opportuni-

ties to live a meaningful life, a sense of personal integrity—every person I talked with had one or two particular points of emphasis that differed from anyone else's. One father, for instance, specifically named a religious goal. "As Christians, my wife and I want our children to find salvation," he said. "We hope they'll grow up to lead moral, religious, happy lives." When I asked him what methods they were using to achieve that goal, he answered that regular attendance at church activities was important, but that the home atmosphere came first. "We emphasize family devotions and other kinds of learning activities that relate to our faith."

A mother of a teenager and two children in their early twenties also named faith concerns as having top priority. "We tried to instill in our kids the importance of a worthwhile, productive life pointed in a Christian direction." With this overarching perspective, she explained, other aspects of their life fell naturally into place: principles to live by, the courage to stand up for their convictions, a concern for world peace, a proper attitude towards people of minority groups, and so on. Yes, church attendance was one of the ways she and her husband had tried to help their children, but it wasn't as important as personal example. "Our lifestyle was its own teacher," she said. "Children learn best, not by being preached at by their

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parents, but by living day-to-day in an atmosphere where they can *absorb* the values that Dad and Mother prize."

Most of the people I talked with did not specifically mention religious tenets as parenting goals. But I found nearly universal agreement that values which have traditionally been part of religious teaching stand at the forefront of parents' concern. Almost without exception, parents recognized the uniqueness of each child. Sometimes amusement, sometimes consternation, was the response to how different from each other children in the same family could be. One mother and father, reflecting on their experience of rearing six children, put it emphatically: "Each one was a unique individual. We didn't learn this right away, but when we finally did, it took some of the pressure off us *and* our kids."

Another point of agreement among parents was the desire to have children do well in whatever they attempted in work, in study, even in recreation. "I don't care what field they choose, if they go to college or not. But I want them to fulfill their potential to its fullest." That statement by a father of two small girls was representative of the sentiments of many. Taking a slightly different approach, one person hoped her children would learn "not to view perfection as a virtue."

Common also was a desire that children grow up to be responsible adults, independent enough to make it on their own. One woman, still anticipating parenthood, underlined this attitude by stating that she probably would not pay for her children to attend college. A college graduate herself, she said, "I think college students who have to pay for their own education have a greater sense of responsibility, a better grasp of the 'real world,' than those who get a free ride through college."

One of my chief discoveries came in seeing how many fathers and mothers do indeed take their roles as parents seriously. They spoke of heavy investments of their time and energy in helping their children learn and develop. They expressed concern that their children have a healthy regard for self. "The best thing I can give my child is a sense of her own self-worth," said one parent-to-be.

How did these conversations affect me personally? I suppose the main effect was the awareness that I, like most people, haven't been all that intentional about my goals as a parent. I've heeded

the advice of the experts about financial planning. My wife and I have both given a good deal of time as well to developing our vocational goals. In our professional lives, we've been required to do concrete planning by setting goals and objective for the organizations we've worked for. By contrast, our vocation as parents (and vocation, or "calling," is surely an appropriate word to apply to parenting) has not benefited by similar planning.

This contrast came home to me a few weeks ago when I was leading a retreat for a church board. One of my resources for helping the board state purposes, goals, and objectives gave the following example of how Christian parents might go about goal-setting.

Purpose: *to be productive/creative as a family with supportive relationships, and to be involved in spiritual and social betterment in the church and the world.*

Goal: *to enable both father and mother to share in the parenting responsibilities while pursuing their own vocational interests and sharing leadership gifts with the church and society.*

Objective: *until 1990, each parent will seek part-time jobs outside the home and will coordinate schedules so as to maximize participation of each in the homemaking/parenting roles, with neither working more than 30 hours per week outside the home.*

How many parents take time to do this kind of planning? My hunch is that very few do so. But doesn't the parental calling deserve as much intentionality as a job or profession?

A beginning step can be giving some careful thought to the values one hopes to pass on to children. When I sat down to compile my own list, I found that while some of the things on it had been receiving sufficient attention, others had not. My list, in part, contained the following:

Honesty, responsible use of God's gifts, appropriate regard for authority, education, physical well-being, respect for others' personhood and traditions, responsible use of freedom.

I agree with the person who told me that personal example is the best way to teach values such as these. But I've lately gained a new appreciation for the need to articulate them in conversation with children at the appropriate times. I can't forget what a mother told me about one

of the values she had hoped to pass on to her five sons. "I don't believe I ever said this to my boys," she told me, "but I wanted them to grow up giving their lives to building, not destroying or killing." My silent response had two sides to it—a strong affirmation of that value, and a question: why *hadn't* she ever "said" it to her boys?

Sometimes it takes a dramatic situation to force parents to say what they believe. When our daughter started first grade, she had her first experience walking to the bus stop. Several days after school began, my wife and I discovered that instead of waiting at her regular stop, Katie was going up to the next block to wait for the bus. When we asked her why, she said that Charlene, a 4th grader, didn't want to stand at the same bus stop with black kids, and that all the white kids had followed Charlene's move to the new bus stop. It was Katie's first experience with racial prejudice in our racially integrated neighborhood, and it was our opportunity to explain how we felt about the issue. We tried to explain that some people disliked others because of the color of their skin, but that our family didn't believe this was right. We accompanied her to her original waiting place for a few days and helped her get acquainted with the black children. It didn't take long until Katie was handling the situation just fine on her own. And eventually Charlene and the gang returned to the bus stop.

How do we measure success as parents? It is too early to say in Katie's case. She's only 8 years old now; her values are still in the formation process. But nearly a year and a half after the incident recorded above, she and her mother were attending a ballet, and Katie turned to her and whispered with puzzlement on her face, "Hey, Mom, there aren't any *black* kids up there!"

In one sense, it is nearly impossible for parents to say with finality: "we've succeeded" or "we've failed." After all, life is always in process; children, and their parents too, are always "becoming."

One older couple, thinking about how their four grown children were doing, said it very well. "Now that our kids have families of their own, you'd think our work as parents would be over. And in one sense it is. But we'll never stop being parents, really. Their accomplishments still make us proud, their mistakes and failures still cause us pain. We'll be their parents as long as we live." ■



The behavior of Christ's family

A study of Ephesians 5 and 6:1-9

by Ruth and Eber Dourte

Former articles in the *Visitor* have examined the nature and the mission of Christ's family—the church. In this article we consider in a practical way the day-to-day behaviors of the members of Christ's family as we try to work together harmoniously so as to accomplish the mission in a reasonably mature way.

It might seem ever so much easier to do the task and behave maturely if only we didn't have to do it together, if only each of us had an individual assignment which neatly matched the personality, the gifts, the aspirations, and the pace of only one person.

But God has placed us members in the body and gifted us by his spirit as it pleases Him. "God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be." 1 Corinthians 12:18. The mission is mutual, the labor corporate. Ephesians 4:13 says, "til we all come." The family lingers for the stragglers and harnesses the energy of those who would plunge ahead. We are Christ's family. We try to do it his way.

Two general principles

The first rule then of the behavior of Christ's family is that it be modeled after Christ's example.

Ephesians 5:1-2 challenges us to do that very thing. "As dearly loved children . . . live the life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 2 Corinthians 2: 14-16 seems to suggest that God is sniffing the air for odors that smell like Jesus, that God spreads the knowledge of himself everywhere by that aroma.

Sacrifice hurts. Blood is shed. Bodies are broken. Nobody wants to sacrifice himself. Even Jesus didn't feel like doing

it. Any behavior is a sacrifice *only* if it's hard to do, if it costs a lot. It's a sacrifice only if we freely choose to do it. Jesus said, "No man takes my life. I lay it down." Sacrifice is folly to worldly people. But to God and to Christ's family it is life and health and peace. To God, bleeding, dying, sacrificial love is a sweet smell—like his Son Jesus, the elder brother in our family. (See Corinthians 4:10-11.)

Many positive behaviors are described in Ephesians 5: 4-20. We give thanks. We live as children of light, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness and righteousness and truth. We check out everything to see if it pleases the Lord. We live carefully, making the most of every opportunity, using time wisely. We attempt to understand God's will. We are filled with the Spirit. We encourage one another by way of Scripture and singing. We give thanks for everything in the name of Jesus.

Verses 3-14 also remind us that no behaviors may be tolerated which defile or disgrace the family. Not even a hint of sexual immorality, or impurity, or greed, or obscenity, or foolish and coarse talk. No immoral or impure or greedy person will inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God. That's why the family is so concerned about such persons. We must refrain from compromise with people who try to deceive us into believing or behaving as though any deviations from God's standards of behavior are permissible under any circumstances.

Christ's behavior was above reproach in every way. Perhaps it was not in the plan of God for Jesus to marry, so that it is forever clear that a member of Christ's family can be a whole person without sexual relationships or marriage, though the dangers of immorality, impurity, or greed are not eliminated by marriage.

The second general rule of behavior is found in verse 21. "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." There is mutual submission and love. We are open to hearing and responding to one another. It does no harm to listen

respectfully to everything any person has to say. Who is right is not important. What is right is very important. If there is enough hearing and speaking and thanksgiving in Jesus' name, the light thus shed will reveal all goodness and righteousness and truth (5:9-10). We often fail to behave like Jesus towards one another in the family because we don't know enough about each other. This submission to one another is out of reverence to Christ, who treated every sincere person with genuine respect. Sacrificial love and submission are two sides of the same coin. Nothing in all the world was so submissive, so attentive, so understanding, so gentle, so unselfish, so undemanding as the love of Jesus!

We turn our attention now to the specific behaviors of Christ's family as members of earthly families—the behavior of husbands, wives, children, parents—remembering that we look to Christ himself as our example.

Behavior of husbands

First, there is in this earthly family a husband who loves and leads and lays down his life like Jesus. Look at Ephesians 5:25-31. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. *In this same way*, husbands ought to love their wives . . ."

What a challenge to husbands!

Love your wife with sacrificial, self-giving love.

Give yourself to helping her become a better person.

Minister to her in such a way that old faults and failures will be washed away, and you will have a new wife, holy and blameless, the reward to yourself of your Christlike love for her.

Care for her as thoughtfully as you care for your own body, Paul says, attending to her needs and comforts without indifference or neglect.

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David Strickler

Leave your father and mother for this reason—to demonstrate how Christ loves the church.

Nothing diverts the Christian husband from this commitment. The word for joined means cemented or glued. No putting asunder! No divorce! God hates it! (That sounds harsh, but divorced and separated people, crushed and defeated, have met regularly in our home for eight years, and we have felt, with scores of these people, the pain and agony divorce causes to parents and children. We understand better all the time why God hates it!)

When life is good, rejoice with each other. When things are at their worst, forgive each other. Forgiveness heals the fractures in marriage. Divorce congeals the fractures. Hosea forgave and restored his unfaithful wife to favor, like God. Jesus promises, "I will never leave you or forsake you!" Initiating divorce is unthinkable behavior for a member of Christ's family. This object lesson of unconditional loyalty in marriage is woven into the very fabric of Christ's relationship to the church—his bride. How gently Jesus treated women. In *The Four Loves* C. S. Lewis says that Christ does not find the bride lovely, his love makes her lovely, and that marriage is best which most nearly approximates a crucifixion.

Ephesians 5:23 which precedes this section also summarizes it. "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ

is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior." Here it is again, husbands like Christ leading and loving wives in a saving way. This is headship.

How did Christ portray headship? By saving us, first of all. The "I Am's" of the gospel of John portray Christ's headship as taking responsibility for our safety and nourishment: light of the world, bread of life, living water, the good shepherd giving his life for the sheep. In Psalm 23 we have the added word pictures of green pastures, still waters, restoration, righteousness, safety, companionship, and comfort. This sounds like Ephesians 5. Men thus love their wives as a proper expression of self-love, self-esteem.

We saw this kind of love demonstrated in the home of a Brethren in Christ pastor. At the dinner table this pastor seated himself between his wife and the two youngest children, one of whom was a baby on a high chair. He fed the baby and cut the meat for the other child. Two older children sat on the other side of the mother who peacefully enjoyed her meal while he or the older children refilled dishes and water glasses. When we commented on this unusual behavior, he explained that she had prepared the meal and attended to getting the children to church while he was preparing for the morning service, and this seemed only fair to him.

Our own late C. N. Hostetter once said, "A man is responsible before God

for the spiritual development and welfare of his wife and his children."

Behavior of wives

What about the behavior of wives? There is in this family a wife who submits to and respects her Christlike husband. "Wives, submit to your husband as to the Lord. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. The wife must respect her husband." (5:22, 24, 33)

Three simple statements made to wives without describing that submission, except the implication that she must yield to her husband's efforts to love and minister to her in Christlike ways. However, since Paul uses Christ's example to explain love, let us look at Christ's example to understand submission. Submission cannot be understood apart from responding trustfully to the authority and guidance of God. Pioneering the frontiers of God's will is headship, and our obedience to God's will is submission. Christ's response to God's will was obedience, even though it resulted in humiliation and death. Philipians 2:5-8 teaches, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant . . . he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore, God exalted him . . ." While this passage describes the behavior of a man, its message applies no less to women.

God didn't intimidate and humiliate Jesus. Jesus humbled himself. Christ did not demand equality with God. God's headship conferred both equality and honor. This understanding of headship and ranking (for submit means to arrange under), guarantees to each person equal benefits of God's intention towards us as "heirs together" and "joint heirs" with Christ. (See 1 Peter 3:7; Romans 8:17.)

Several years ago, at an Evangelical United Brethren church near Millersburg, we stayed in the home of a devout and humble man who introduced himself with these words, "Me and the Lord and my lovely wife, we have this electrical business . . ." During that visit we saw in all the activities and relationships between husband and wife and sons the beauty of headship, submission, equality, and reciprocal care that truly glorified Christ.

Women living or working with men who by virtue of God's authority and Christ's example confer upon women worth and value, dignity and respect, equal to the esteem with which men should regard themselves, feel no bondage in servanthood. They choose it. Such women have no need to grasp or strive for recognition or equality. Such women need no liberation movement. They are already encouraged to be and do all that God gifted them to be and do, by men who help them feel good about being women. Women fighting and clamoring for recognition and respect are no more Christlike than those men who suppress women or use women in any way for their own advantage.

Self-giving love and servanthood seem somehow more natural for women and more difficult for men. Every man begins his life carried and cared for by a woman and must differentiate from this woman who nourishes him, while girls simply identify with her. Many men never come full cycle to the maturity

which enables them to watch over and care for others as they were once watched over and cared for. Perhaps Paul recognizes this by the amount of emphasis he gives in describing the husband's responsibility in the marriage and less to wives who appear to be instructed simply to submit to Christlike love. Oh how easy is this assignment, compared to the heavy assignment given to men.

Galatians 3:28 describes further this attitude of Christ's family: no race or class or gender superiority. We are *all* one! So the goal of "oneness" is higher than the rules of headship and submission. Headship and submission say "I" and "You." Oneness says "We." Headship expresses itself in servanthood and exercises itself in the interest of equality and mutual advantage.

Behavior of children

We now give attention to the behavior of children. The first word is *obey* and means "to listen to." The children of

Christian marriage will generally find obedience to parents, who love and lead and lay down their lives for each other like Jesus, not really difficult. These parents are "in the Lord" and the benefits of God's graciousness are also available to these children through their parents. Children trust such parents as Christ trusted his Father. Even children who feel insecure in relationships with faltering parents need to obey, because children lack the experience and knowledge necessary to discern what behaviors are appropriate. One boy asked his father, "Dad, how old do I have to be before I can do as I please?" The wise father answered, "I don't know, son; no one ever lived that long yet!"

Obedience is mandatory. Hebrews 13:17 places responsibility for leadership on equal basis with accountability to God. Obedient children help parents to succeed in parenting and to give account to God with joy. Jesus did not demand his rights, argue with, or defy his heavenly father *or* his earthly father. At age twelve the smartest boy who ever lived, understanding much more about the will of God for him than the learned adults of his day, went home to Nazareth and was obedient to his earthly parents. Children also must follow the example of Jesus.

The second word to children is *honor*. Honor is more than a feeling, more than words. It is the same word which describes the honor done by Jesus to his Father. It means to value at a price. It costs something to do it. It cost Jesus something to honor *his* father. But this price paid is an investment in the child's own welfare. It sounds like amounting to something. I said to a three-year-old grandson, "Joshua, I'm proud of you." Then I asked, "What does proud of you mean?" He answered confidently, "It means you did good."

Honor your father and mother is the first commandment with a promise—that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. At a parents' conference in a little Methodist circuit in north central Appalachia, we learned that every year for several years in one valley, one high school senior was killed on prom night, and the heart of every parent stood frozen in apprehension. In that valley the leading causes of death were teenage suicide and drinking. Disobedient children often put their own lives in jeopardy, and disrespectful children cut themselves off from the blessings of God in their lives. Children too must submit and sacrifice.

A mother's musings

by Thata Book

Today, son, you stood in the Mtshabezi Church and were ordained to the Christian ministry. As I rejoiced with you in this special occasion, my mind went back across the years.

I remembered when I first felt life. We did want a boy, and I had asked God if he would be pleased to give us our wish. He did. You first opened your eyes at Mtshabezi and Mtshabezi was your boyhood home. Here you learned to pray and become aware of spiritual concerns, I remembered you praying, "Bless all those who are going to die tonight and send someone to tell them about you." Here I struggled with you, teaching you that you had to obey me—that took many spankings and much persistence, but you did learn.

Later, you were baptized at Mpopoma in Bulawayo. You grew in your sensitivity to spiritual things and would come, sharing your misdemeanors, giving me opportunity to advise and counsel. In the States, I remember your writing from Kansas, that at Youth Camp you had dedicated your life to God and had been filled with the Holy Spirit.

I remember when you introduced that special girl to us, "A sister in the Lord." We were happy that you chose Bible/Religion as your major in college and then seminary in preparation for serving your Savior.

And now you stood before these people whom you love, in this place where you ran and played as a boy, taking your vows to serve God and his Church as a minister of the Gospel. Beside you stood that special "sister in Christ," who has also felt and answered God's call to service. We receive our African friends' congratulations, but we know we can't take honor to ourselves. God has placed his hand on you, and you have responded. We are humbly grateful. God bless you, son; we are happy we could be a part of this, your special day. We love you.

Written after Curtis Book's January 20, 1985, ordination at Mtshabezi Mission in Zimbabwe.

Behavior of parents

The behavior of parents is briefly stated but broad in implication. In the first place it is addressed to fathers, a word which means begetters. Fathers are often the missing link in family unity. Nowadays many fathers simply *beget* children, and mothers bring them up. This practice produces lopsided children—victims of too much mothering, too little fathering. The male and female elements of the image of God must be well blended and integrated in the child's nurture and discipline.

Ephesians specifies that *the begetters* shall bring up the children in the training and instruction of the Lord! That's a great deal more than teaching children how to play and possibly how to work. Much controversy would be eliminated in families if fathers got busy with training and instruction in the Lord and mothers let them do it. Rarely do mothers clamor for worldly things in opposition to fathers' concern about the will of God. More often mothers fret about fathers' lack of interest in this leadership. Tournier says women become insecure when men are weak.

When fathers take time to train and instruct in the will of God (show and tell, in that order) children naturally assume that such instruction is important, and they themselves learn how to do it for their children. Children are confused by inconsistency between dad's professed beliefs and his behavior. When children are expected to be kind and obedient, and dad himself is not kind to the family or obedient to God, it is confusing.

God is an active listener and patiently non-coercive, though he does punish. God encourages his children to talk to him. It is not disrespectful of children to ask questions. Jesus did. Children too need to be heard and understood. The heavenly father's ear is open to our cry. Our ears and hearts should be open to the cries, the feelings, the needs of our children. Parents who bark orders without dialogue or understanding, exasperate children.

"Provoke to wrath" (6:4) is an accurate translation. Dr. Ed Cole in *Maximized Manhood* tells how he took responsibility for the hole in the door made by his teenage son and asked the boy's forgiveness, after his impatient denial of a legitimate request. When children are provoked to wrath, it is caused by failure to love and lead according to God's will.

Obedience to God on the part of fathers would bring a renewal of stabil-

ity and harmony in family life, the like of which can *never* be achieved by elaborate schemes for Christian education which, needful as it is, seems to contribute to parental abdication. We recently heard another young couple explain piously that they moved closer to the church so their children could more easily get there.

Psalm 78 and Deuteronomy 6 command that fathers speak much about God and his wonderful works to children and grandchildren, inside and outside their homes. Children respond so well to that. We were marveling at the beauty of God's handiwork on our mountain with eight-year-old grandson Benjamin, and with great joy he exclaimed, "Grandma, I think Jesus will come in the spring!"

If we talked more about things like this and lived the life God ordains for his family, instead of those wasted hours with television which speaks continually the awful deeds of Satan, families would thrive on the love which such obedience breeds, and children would respond to parents with such natural respect, that everywhere we would marvel as at a miracle. This family therapy costs nothing, but rather enriches everyone and everything it touches. And it is in the power of the begetters to bring it about! We call today for a revival of the art of fathering!

Leaders and followers

Finally, this passage assigned to us gives instruction about the behavior of servants and masters. All of us are enjoined to obey leaders with respect and sincere hearts, just as we would obey Christ, doing the will of God (note that this implies employment that God himself would approve), knowing that the Lord will reward justly, for he is master over all masters. It is hard for us to get it into our heads that God alone closes the books and makes the final audit. Life isn't fair, but God is!

Leaders shall treat followers the same way (note the mutual submission and respect). There shall be no threats, intimidation, favoritism, or partiality. Thus the headship of God in Christ, with all intention of his goodness and mercy, grace and love, flows down to each of us and through each of us to every person placed under our stewardship of human personality. For this stewardship we all stand accountable to God. The ultimate question will be: Do I demonstrate my obedience to God, as Jesus obeyed God in the way he loves

and serves the church? We have no effectual witness to our world as members of Christ's family unless we do indeed lay down our lives for each other in imitation of the sacrificial love of Jesus. Acting important doesn't draw people to Jesus or even to ourselves.

Somehow we expect success in relationships to just happen, and if this work becomes difficult, we turn away or quit. One Brethren in Christ woman said recently, "I should never have married my husband. He loses his temper and swears. I'm going to divorce him. I know divorce is wrong, but won't God forgive me and doesn't Jesus want me to be happy?" I countered with these two questions, "When do you plan to repent?" And, "Was Jesus happy?"

In the counseling ministry, we are keenly aware of the tendency to blame poor behavior on other people, in place of personal confession of sin and guilt, public tears of repentance, and prayers at the family altar (at home or church). Thus many people are cheated of the blessed relief of singing, "Oh, the joy of sins forgiven; oh, the bliss the blood-washed know; oh, the peace akin to heaven, where the healing waters flow."

Christ's mission is to save people. Saving people, including husbands, wives, and children is hard work. Christ-like behavior is often painful and discouraging, and the results not equal to the effort, but the church can be no stronger than our families.

At the same time, we recognize the long, laborious pilgrimage from the present to the ideal. There are no perfect Christians, fathers, mothers, children, masters, or servants. Success is the result of both wisdom and hard work.

Paul, writing to the Philippians at the very end of his long and faithful life of service, makes no arrogant claims of supersainthood. He states simply, "Brothers, I have not practiced perfectly what I preach, nor have I achieved all that Christ desires for me, but I do earnestly press on towards the heavenly call of God, which is to be like Jesus." We feel the same way, as we learn and press on.

The scriptural standards for the behavior of Christ's family are very high. The Holy Spirit indwells and fills us to help us. The benefits of our adherence to those high standards are rich and abiding. Let us confess our personal failures and recommit ourselves to the beauty of this holiness: laying down our lives for each other in Christ's family. ■



A number of Brethren in Christ represented our denomination at the 43rd annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals, held in Los Angeles in March. The following news notes highlight some of the convention's activities and business items.

Narramore calls for a "theology of family"

Calling for a radical change in the current structure of theological education, Bruce Narramore, psychologist and dean of Rosemead School of Psychology at Biola University, La Mirada, California, told NAE's convention that Christian colleges and seminaries must not "separate our theology of ministry from our theology of family."

Narramore said that while Christian institutions of higher education have complex systematic theologies developed in many doctrinal areas, a theology of the family is virtually unheard-of.

"Our colleges and seminaries must be significantly altered to train pastors" on the personal aspects of their family lives, he said.

"Where are courses about the family currently taught?" he asked. "In the Christian education department, not in the theology department." This must change, he stressed.

The first speaker in a day-long emphasis on family issues, Narramore also said that pastors and Christians in full-time ministry must seek to balance their ministry with their family responsibilities. In looking at the growing divorce rate in Christian families, Narramore said, "Some great Christian leaders have been failures at home. We lose an awful lot" of young people from the church because leaders lose sight of their families due to an over-emphasis on ministry.

"Dismayed" over family survey

The NAE Task Force on the Family is "dismayed" over its recently conducted "individual pastor survey," according to Ted Ward, professor of curriculum research for the college of education at Michigan State University.

Ward, who has been chairman of the task force since its inception in 1982, said that 58 percent of evangelical pastors were aware of an increase in family breakdown in their churches. However, they seem satisfied with their own ability to handle the problems of their parishioners, and seldom seek out other pastors or professional counselors in meeting needs in their own congregations. Unfortunately, they seem to feel that the problem is not grave.

The task force study suggests that the personal and social pressures listed in the survey "emerge from a failure to cope with contemporary culture in uniquely Christian ways."

Few pastors were willing to take time to respond to the survey. Because of the slim response, Ward concluded, the task force was forced to ask, "Does this pastor (represented by the survey response) really want help?" Ward urged denominational executives sincerely concerned about family problems to correspond with the task force through the NAE office.

Neighbor or robber?

Arthur E. Gay Jr., immediate past-president of the National Association of Evangelicals, challenged more than 500 attendees of the World Relief luncheon with the question: "Will the evangelical church of America be known as neighbor or robber by the nation and world around us?"

"What is it we model to our people in terms of hunger and suffering around the world?" Evangelical Christians, according to Gay, should be a neighborhood of believers, modeling the "Ultimate Neighbor"—Jesus Christ. "Many of us may not be viewed so much as neighbors, but as robbers," he said, referring to the parable of the Good Samaritan. "The world sees the difference and then doesn't want our Jesus."

In affirming Gay's convictions, John Perkins, noted author and social worker, delivered the benediction. Through tears and a broken voice, Perkins stressed Gay's main point that evangelical Christians must give more to the poor than their charity—they must give themselves.

Practical focus concludes Leadership Day

With a hands-on focus, family psychologist H. Norman Wright led convention participants in a brisk session on the practical "how tos" to building stronger family ministries.

After a brief "brainstorming session" in which participants interacted over goals for family ministry, Wright cited his two basic goals as challenging "each family member to reflect the presence and Lordship of Jesus Christ" and "allowing Christ to be the source of stability through the hurricanes of life."

Wright said that pastors need to help

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church members "anticipate" the various stages yet to come in their lives, such as marriage and retirement. He also told his audience that people must be prepared for the possibilities of personal tragedy and setback.

Unfortunately, said Wright, "I have found an unhealthy theology in people going through crisis."

Emphasizing the necessity of applying biblical truth to all family situations, Wright stressed that "God is our source of stability."

Tada becomes NAE'S 1985 Layperson of the Year

Like the refreshing coolness of a California night, the gentle spirit of Joni Eareckson Tada brought a calmness to the brisk pace of NAE convention activity. Tada, a popular Christian speaker and author, was in attendance to be honored as NAE's 1985 Layperson of the Year. She became the first woman to be awarded this special NAE distinction.

In presenting the award to Tada, NAE President Robert McIntyre cited the swimming accident that left her permanently paralyzed and her ultimate triumph amid tragedy.

Soon after the accident "God began to use her growing faith and vital testimony to win people to Christ," said McIntyre. In recounting her first book and resulting movie, McIntyre said she "captured the hearts and imagination of the Christian world."

As founder of Joni and Friends, a ministry to assimilate the disabled into the church and mainstream society, she has helped "churches sharpen their awareness of the needs of those with physical disabilities," he continued. "Having noted that all too often society puts value on a person equal to their physical ability to function, she challenges society, and especially churches, to see human life in terms of spiritual importance rather than physical ability or beauty."

"Joni Eareckson Tada," McIntyre concluded, "you have challenged us to know more of the grace of God in our lives and to serve him faithfully whatever the circumstances. We love you, thank God for your life and are challenged by your unquenchable faith."

"I receive this award with honor and fear and trembling," Tada responded. Upon turning the attention from herself to her staff and board at Joni and Friends, she asked the audience to rec-

ognize her fellow co-workers who were present for the festivities. It is they who must share in this honor with me, she said, amid growing applause.

Preaching to the hungriest, neediest generation . . .

"When I read about 14½ million churches who go months and months without a single baptism, I think someone is doing something wrong." That statement, made by Charles F. Stanley, senior pastor of the 9,600-member First Baptist Church of Atlanta, Georgia, and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was received by several "amens"—the traditional Southern Baptist response to good preaching.

In his keynote message to the NAE convention, Stanley emphasized the need for preaching the gospel "in a very clear fashion. We are preaching to the hungriest, neediest generation in a long time." He pointedly asked the nearly 1,000 pastors and laypeople in attendance if the responses they receive when sharing the good news of Christ are

"that's what I've been looking for" responses.

"Hurting people don't want to hear from people who have read books. They want to hear from people who hurt." In pinpointing specifics, Stanley said it's time evangelicals stopped looking down their noses at "homosexuals" and other sinners.

"The first thing we've got to do," he said, "is love them."

Omartian speaks on child abuse

Pert and vibrant, Stormie Omartian has gained growing attention as a recording artist and song writer. Few would suspect that this wife and mother of two was a victim of extreme physical and emotional abuse as a child.

Addressing the NAE Women's Fellowship Commission luncheon she described herself as a person who has "been delivered from the paralyzing chains of the enemy"—chains which include irrational fear, depression, de-

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Hope in Christ alone

Responding to the growing despair and continual breakdown in moral values, the National Association of Evangelicals adopted the following position paper during its March 4-7 convention.

The Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel offer hope in the midst of despair. The Apostle Paul prayed that the Church might "know the hope" to which it has been called (Ephesians 1:18).

Apart from Christ our world is devoid of hope. This is evidenced by the spirit of despair, which is intensified in our national, ethnic, social and economic relationships.

Apart from Christ individuals also are devoid of hope. The pursuit of material gains, status, pleasure, and personal security on the part of poor and rich alike, is futile and gives no hope as evidenced by the rising suicide rate, and the increasing dependency on alcohol and other drugs.

The hope that we proclaim God has revealed and provided in Jesus Christ alone. He is our only source of confidence—not human wisdom nor ability. The hope we share requires repentance and faith which results in forgiveness and reconciliation in this life. The culmination of our hope is the return of Christ and everlasting life in His presence. This hope, which is the message of the Scriptures, provides the only answer to the despair of all humanity.

Words of hope without a life of love lack credibility and are as noisy gongs and clanging cymbals in the ears of God and man. We, therefore, confess our past failure to demonstrate hope consistently in tangible ways. We furthermore rededicate ourselves to both proclamation of the gospel and expressions of hope such as the alleviation of human suffering, the feeding of the hungry, and support for development programs.

The National Association of Evangelicals calls upon the Christian Church worldwide to SHARE THE HOPE expressed in the Gospel of Christ and pledges itself to this joyous task.

"WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT . . ."—OR DO WE?

The Apostle Paul commanded the Ephesian church, "Be filled with the Spirit." To the church at Thessalonica he wrote, "Quench not the Spirit." The Bible is full of truth concerning the Holy Spirit.

And yet! The Apostles' Creed contains ten articles on the person and work of Christ, and only one on the Holy Spirit. One feels sometimes that the proportion of ten to one just about represents the interest in the doctrine of the Spirit in the history of Christian thought. Too often the person and doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the most neglected in the Christian faith. While our sermons may deal with experience, emotion and ecstasy, how often do we get down to the foundation of doctrinal truth concerning the Holy Spirit? With the exception of a few great hymns on the work of the Holy Spirit, even our hymnody shows a lack in this area.

Such neglect is disturbing when we remember that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate fact of our Christian revelation, the unique force in our redemption. Two things mark off our Christian faith from the other world religions: (1) the claims of Jesus Christ to be the Redeemer of the world; (2) the place of the Holy Spirit as the agent of that redemption. Thus John Owens, writing concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, says that it is "the touchstone of faith, the one article by which the church stands or falls." Thomas Arnold spoke of it as "the very main thing of all. We are living under the dispensation of the Spirit; in that character God now reveals Himself

to His people. He who does not know God the Holy Ghost cannot know God at all."

As Samuel Chadwick, that great English Methodist and noted holiness teacher and preacher of years gone by, said, "The Holy Scriptures declare Him to be the revealer of all truth, the active agent in all works of redemption, and from first to last the instrument of grace in the experience of salvation. In Him, and through Him, and by Him, is the power that saves. Illumination and conviction, repentance and regeneration, assurance and sanctification are all the work of God the eternal Spirit. To the church He is the source and supply of wisdom and power. The church is the Body of Christ, indwelt and controlled by the Spirit. He directs, energizes, and controls."

Now if it is only too true that the church is often guilty of thinking about the Holy Spirit only in a ration of one to ten (or less), what can be said of us in the more routine affairs of our daily living? While most of us are not like the theologians whose interest lies in the more detailed doctrinal facts of the Holy Spirit, what of the proportion of our interest in the practical outworkings of the Spirit in our lives?

Once a year—one Sunday out of the fifty-two—is called "Whitsunday" and is specially designated as the Sunday set aside to remember the Holy Spirit. Can it be said of us that our interest in the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is only in a proportion of one in fifty-two? If this be true, we are missing the

imperative of Paul's commands: Be filled; quench not the Holy Spirit!

So that we may know what the Holy Spirit should mean to us and so that we may check ourselves in relation to that meaning, we ask, "What image is aroused in my mind when I use the personality words, The Holy Spirit?" Were we to ask that about Jesus Christ, the answer would be easy. We know Jesus in human terms and human forms: a babe in the manger, a boy in the home, a man—serving, loving, hated, followed, despised, and in the end hounded to the very Cross. We can think of Him: despised, rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We can write our pen portraits of Him, paint the pictures that hang on the walls of our homes and our churches.

But when it comes to the person of the Holy Spirit we cannot do that. The nearest thing in human terms that we can find to picture the Spirit is a dove. See the dove descending on Jesus at His baptism, the only medium of expression that seemed to fit the narrow confines of human understanding then as to the presence of the Spirit on that scene.

There is, however, one other picture form for the expression of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures: fire. Think of those Old Testament stories which picture the presence of the Spirit of God:

Moses on the backside of the desert, drawing near to the bush which was burning and yet not consumed.

Elijah on Mt. Carmel, calling on God for the fire to descend and consume the sacrifice.

Isaiah in the temple, seeing the smoke that filled the temple, and in the presence of that picture of the Spirit of God, crying aloud his own sense of unworthiness; and then the angel with the coal from off the altar . . . the Spirit says, "your lips are cleansed!"

Then come in awe to the New Testament and the culmination of all that went before, and read the story of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. What does Scripture say? "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come . . . there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." John the Baptist's statement of Jesus comes sharply to mind, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

CHA award presented to Arthur Climenhaga

Dr. Arthur M. Climenhaga received the "Holiness Exponent of the Year" award from the Christian Holiness Association's 117th annual convention, held April 23-25, 1985, in Bethany, Okla. This award is given each year by the CHA to a respected articulator of the message of Christian holiness.

Dr. Climenhaga has had wide exposure around the world as an evangelist, teacher, and writer. He served as the Executive Director of the National Association of Evangelicals (1964-67), was Dean of Western Evangelical Seminary (1972-78), and Director of Academic

Affairs at Ashland Theological Seminary (1978-1982). Assignments within the Brethren in Christ Church include serving as missionary administrator in Africa (1945-1960), Bishop of the Midwest and Pacific Conferences (1967-1972) and General Secretary of the denomination (1973-1984).

Arthur and his wife Lona are residents of Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, Pa. He continues active ministry as a seminary professor at large, as a Bible conference speaker, and assisting in the missions program of Brethren in Christ Missions.

Dr. Arthur M. Climenhaga

We believe in the Holy Spirit, or do we? Have we been so "filled," so baptized, that the sense of the "fire" of God's presence burns in our hearts? If so, let us not quench his living presence within. If so, let us seek his constant, daily, baptizing, cleansing presence. As the late Bishop Myron Boyd so wonderfully said it, "Just as the fluid in the eye keeps the dirt out of the eyes, so the constant cleansing presence of the Holy Spirit will keep the filth of the world out of the cleansed heart."

Such a belief in the Holy Spirit will bring us to the place where we will earnestly desire to deal with the old nature within by seeking the baptizing, infilling Holy Spirit. We will keep from putting out the fire of the Holy Spirit by stirring up the embers of our witness for the Lord (Acts 5:32), by fanning the flames of our prayer life in the Spirit (Romans 8:26), by keeping the love flame of the Spirit burning bright (Ephesians 4:30-32).

The love flame of the Spirit is the only thing that will solve all of the problems that face us in our intricate society. It is the only thing that will oil the wheels of a church organization and make it run smoothly. It is the only thing that will give adequate direction to a full life in the Lord. No wonder our fathers pled that we seek that "perfect love" of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, yes, we do! And because of that, we pray in the immortal lines of that great hymn writer, Isaac Watts:

Come, Holy Spirit, heav'nly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning pow'rs;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

Look! how we grovel here below,
Fond of these earthly toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys.

Dear Lord, and shall we ever live
At this poor dying rate,
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee,
And Thine to us so great?

Come, Holy Spirit, heav'nly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning pow'rs;
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours.

spair and an abusive tendency toward her own child.

"Only the love and power of God can deliver a person from the pain of an abused childhood," she stressed

Omartian, of Studio City, California, said that at age 28, because of the brokenness of her life, she thought her life was over. At that point, through the influence of a friend, a pastor and the Gospel of John, she became a Christian. Her life began a process of healing.

"Two years ago, when someone asked me if the pain ever completely goes away, I said, 'I don't know,'" Omartian told the gathering. "Today I can say, 'Yes, the pain is completely gone.'"

"You know that you have been delivered," she said, "when you can turn around and help someone else." She is especially interested in helping prison women, 95 percent of whom, she claims, have been abused themselves.

Following the luncheon, Omartian participated in a workshop on helping victims of child abuse. The workshop was also sponsored by the Women's Fellowship Commission.

Through NAE, Hispanics now have a rallying point, says Miranda

Becoming part of the evangelical movement in the United States is one of the major goals of Hispanic leaders attending the 43rd annual NAE convention, said Juan Carlos Miranda, director of the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth in Pasadena, California.

Sessions for the Spanish speaking community have been a special feature of this year's convention, held in Los Angeles. This unique focus has also included simultaneous translations into Spanish of the biblical keynote sessions and evening plenary sessions. And earlier this week, the NAE Board of Administration voted unanimously to establish a Hispanic commission.

Under the umbrella of the NAE, Hispanics will now have a rallying point, said Miranda, chairman of the Hispanic committee for the 1985 NAE convention. Miranda suggested that through NAE, Anglo and Hispanic evangelicals can develop mutual understanding between cultures. Despite cultural diversity, he said, "we have one thing in common. We are all evangelicals."

In addressing specific concerns of

Hispanics, Miranda pointed out that Hispanic pastors face all the usual problems of urban living, in addition to the problems of immigration and documentation. (He commented that sensitive evangelicals should discontinue the use of the term "illegal aliens." The preferred reference is "documented" or "undocumented" people.)

Another Hispanic leader, Jesse Miranda, superintendent of the Pacific Latin American District of the Assemblies of God, said that one of the greatest challenges of the evangelical church is to reach third and fourth generation Hispanics. "These people have become economically and professionally secure," he stated. "They neither identify with the Hispanic church, which is dominated by recent immigrants, nor with the Anglo church. They fall between the cracks."

Educators grapple with academic freedom

Should evangelical professors express unpopular viewpoints? Now the hard question: Should they be able to do so when what they say conflicts with the policies of the Christian institutions where they teach?

The issue is "academic freedom"—and it's becoming a hot topic in evangelical circles, and especially in evangelical colleges and seminaries. And it provided the impetus for a luncheon sponsored jointly by the American Association of Evangelical Students and the NAE Higher Education Commission.

"As a term, 'academic freedom' is a red flag," said speaker Sammy Oxendine, academic dean at East Coast Bible College in Charlotte, North Carolina. "To many it is synonymous with all the ills of society—communism, socialism and heresy. For those who are men of reason, however, there is a scriptural basis for academic freedom and all that it encompasses."

Stating that such freedom rises from the Christian faith and the truth coming from God, Oxendine said that Christian institutions of higher learning "should strive to be a community of teaching and learning in which freedom of mind and spirit are accepted as fundamental."

But the sticky point is defining "truth coming from God"—defining the acceptable perimeters of freedom.

In grappling with this issue, Oxendine said that each Christian institution of learning should develop a statement to

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establish institutional policies of academic freedom.

Oxendine stressed, however, that the statement must clearly state that freedom to "research, explore and teach" is not an open license. That is, conclusions reached by professors should not conflict with the "institutional statement of faith and objectives."

The session also included the insights of Barry Callen, vice president and academic dean at Anderson college, who presented the results of his study on "academic freedom"; along with a case study given by Robert Cooley, president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

A Trio of NAE Resolutions

Homosexuality

Taking a strong stand against homosexuality, NAE adopted a resolution stating that "homosexuality is a deviation from the Creator's plan for human sexuality."

While stating that homosexuals, "as individuals, are entitled to Civil Rights" afforded to them by law, the resolution

stridently opposed legislation based upon "sexual orientation." It went on to "strongly urge" that churches and religious organizations be exempt from complying to any "so-called 'Gay Rights' legislation," which is currently law.

The resolution also stressed the importance of compassionately proclaiming the good news of forgiveness to those involved in homosexual practices, accepting them into fellowship "upon confession of faith and repentance" from the homosexual sin.

The statement concluded by calling upon "pastors and theologians along with Christian "medical and sociological specialists" to further research factors leading to homosexuality; with the goal of developing "adequate therapy, pastoral care, and congregational support."

Pornography

Strongly opposed to the \$8 billion pornography industry in the U.S., NAE believes this industry portrays sexual immorality dehumanizing and morally destructive to both children and adults.

"We are committed to speak out against pornography and obscenity at every opportunity," the NAE resolution

reads. "And we call upon the President of the United States to declare publicly his support for the enforcement of obscenity laws and to order the Justice Department to enforce the existing obscenity laws."

The resolution concludes by urging "Christians everywhere to seek ways to minister more effectively to both the victims and perpetrators of obscenity and pornography."

Gambling

The National Association of Evangelicals today reaffirmed its opposition to gambling and lotteries, including those run by government.

"We believe that gambling . . . is potentially addictive . . . a social evil that feeds upon greed and sells a set of fantasy values that exploits people . . . especially the poor," states a resolution passed at NAE's business meeting. "The tragic end result is often deepened poverty and increased welfare rolls."

The resolution further states: "Gambling undermines the economic base of a nation" by reducing people's purchasing power; money lost in gambling cannot purchase constructive and positive goods and services.

Compulsive gambling results in weakened and disintegrated individual character, said the resolution. It leads to indolence, self-delusion, family break-up and even crime, job loss and suicide.

The NAE called upon those "in positions of influence and decision-making to seek other means" of raising revenue.

Day of Prayer for World Evangelization

PENTECOST SUNDAY
MAY 26, 1985

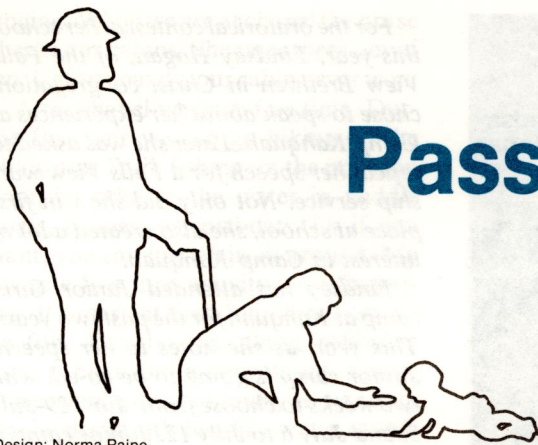


THEME:
IF I BE LIFTED UP

Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

Pornography and 7-Eleven Stores

In response to protests against their sale of pornographic literature in their stores, the 7-Eleven stores have established a toll-free consumer relations number (1-800-255-0711). If enough people call this number to register their objection to the sale of such material in these family-oriented stores, the firm may change its policy. They do not request your name, just your opinion.



Design: Norma Paine

Passing on our heritage

In appreciation of God's faithful servants

by Harriet Bicksler

What husband and wife team have birthdays on the same day? Who is known to be a stern husband and father? Who works at the Missions Center in Mt. Joy? Who has been seen on horseback in local parades with a mounted patrol group? Who rode his snowmobile to church on Sunday? Who is related to the late Dwight Eisenhower?

If you had been at the Grantham Church Christian Education Commission's Appreciation Evening on March 16, you would have found the answers to those and other "Grantham Trivia" questions among your Christian education colleagues. You would also have taken a trip down memory lane and recalled the past 75 years of ministry by the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church.

Jay Barnes, chairman of the Christian Education Commission, was the master of ceremonies for the evening, which included a festival of desserts in the Messiah College Dining Hall. He spoke appreciately and warmly of the many people in the Grantham Church—Sunday school teachers, club leaders, youth leaders, choir directors, quiz coaches, nursery workers, and committee members—who serve faithfully each week. Then he turned the program over to Jacob Kuhns, a long-time member of the congregation and now church librarian.

After showing some slides of the early years and pointing out appearances on them of past and present members, Jacob moderated a panel of four who reminisced about the past and filled in some of the historical details. Helen Brechbill Musser, Grace Stoner Lady, and Naomi Brubaker Brechbill told stories of their early Sunday school expe-

riences, some dating as far back as 1912.

They recalled that the first Sunday school classes at Grantham were held in the S.R. Smith noodle factory on the other side of the railroad tracks. The Grantham Church (as well as the Refton congregation) held the first Brethren in Christ Vacation Bible School in 1929. In both Sunday school and VBS, students were required to memorize large portions of Scripture. Grace Lady remembered getting up in front of the whole Sunday school to recite a quarter's worth of lesson titles and memory verses. Naomi Brechbill remembered a serious biblical question in one class: Who was the first liar? Just as seriously the answer came back: "My brother Earl" (Brechbill, Naomi's stepson).

Naomi also vividly recalled the year she begged not to teach Sunday school. She cried about not wanting the responsibility and pleaded with the Sunday school superintendent to let her off the hook this time. He wouldn't take no for an answer, however. Naomi commented wryly that maybe that explained why the Sunday school superintendent, Albert Brechbill, later became her husband!

All spoke warmly of early Sunday school teachers, of the values of Scripture memorization, and of the fact that because there were few formal Christian education programs in the church, most Christian education happened at home in the family. One sensed some nostalgia for the past as they reminisced.

The fourth member of the panel was Morris Sider, a Grantham member since 1963 and Brethren in Christ Archivist. Morris began his brief historical survey of the Grantham congregation by recalling a time in the 1960's when he was superintendent of the youth department. He was having trouble with some of the high school boys and sought counsel from Howard Landis. Howard was characteristically philosophical and re-

marked that there was probably nothing to worry about. "After all, Morris," he said, "in a few years they'll be bishops in the church!" (No, none of our current bishops was one of these boys!)

Morris quickly reviewed the first years of the Grantham Church. The congregation began when S. R. Smith moved Messiah College to its present location. The first Sunday evening services were held in Smith's temporary home off-campus, and the first morning services in what was the Smith residence on campus (later known as Hillview and then Smith Hall).

In 1912, the first revival was held on campus in Old Main. Because so many came under conviction during that revival, the services overflowed to the noodle factory which had to close down for awhile. Following this extended revival, several people wanted to be baptized. But since this was January and the creek was frigid, that seemed out of the question. S. R. Smith, in a spurt of ingenuity, boarded up a small section of the creek, heated the resulting "pool," and thus provided the means for the "comfortable" baptism of 15 new converts.

Listening to the stories of the past brings new meaning to the work we do now. The faithfulness of past generations serves as a challenge to continue in the task of teaching our children and passing on the heritage we have been given. In that light, Esther Snyder, a former Grantham member, concluded the evening of appreciation for today's faithful servants by speaking on "The Glory of the Grind." She challenged the group to view all work, whether in the church or on the job, as sacred and to be done "to the glory of God."

(By the way, the answers to the questions in the first paragraphs are, in order: Bob and Nancy Ives; Ron Stern; Esther Ebersole; Dave Thompson; Lou Peterson; Pam Lehman)

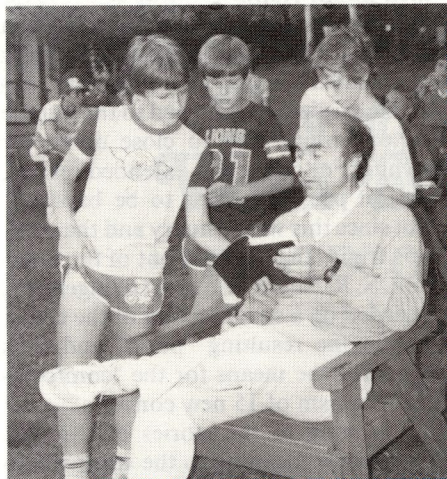
Harriet Bicksler is a member of the Grantham Church since 1962 and Board for Congregational Life page editor for the Visitor.

A child's view of Camp Kahquah

by Lindsay
Hogan



The author, Lindsay Hogan, with her cabin mates at Camp Kahquah.



For the oratorical contest at her school this year, Lindsay Hogan, of the Falls View Brethren in Christ congregation, chose to speak about her experiences at Camp Kahquah. Later she was asked to repeat her speech for a Falls View worship service. Not only did she win first place at school, she also created a lot of interest in Camp Kahquah.

Lindsay has attended Junior Girls' camp at Kahquah for the past two years. This year, as she notes in her speech, Junior camp is going to be co-ed, with two weeks to choose from: June 29-July 5, and July 6 to July 12. Junior camp is for ages 8, 9, and 10. Senior Girls' camp, for ages 11, 12, 13, is from July 13-19, and Senior Boys' from July 20-26.

Here is Lindsay's speech:

I would like to tell you about a place I love to go every summer: Camp Kahquah.

Camp Kahquah is a camp north of Huntsville, on the edge of Lake Ahmic. Kids come to Kahquah for a week or two every summer.

We sleep in cabins of 7 kids and one or two counselors. Last year and the year before, my cabin was Retreat Up. Retreat Up is great—except for the bats. At night last year a baby bat was found flying around the room. As I recall, everyone started screaming. That's when I woke up. Suddenly we realized that there was not one, but two bats in the air. The mother had come to find her baby. We called up Uncle Ernie, and he put the bat outside. I hope the baby bat found its mother.

In the morning we are wakened by the bell. We can either go for a polar dip (that's a swim in the freezing lake as soon as you wake up) or talk for a while before getting dressed. After we get dressed we gather at the flagpole. There we look out over the lake and sing "O Canada" while the counselors try to raise the flag without getting the ropes tangled. Then we all make a dash for the dining hall.

After we sing grace we sit down and wait for our turn to get our food. There is one dangerous thing about meals at camp. If you put your elbows on the table during a meal, everyone sings to you, "Get your elbows off the table!"

After breakfast we have cabin clean-up. The counselors go to devotions and we kids have to clean up the cabin. The stairs even have to be swept! Then we have chapel, which is Bible stories and

singing. While we are at chapel the nurse checks our cabins. She rates them out of ten. Unfortunately, our cabin never won.

After chapel we have free time. During free time we can go hiking on the Hiawatha Trail, fishing on the pontoon boat, or take to the water in paddle boats, canoes, or rowboats. Or if you want, you can just plain sit around. My favorite free time activity is surfboarding. It's scary at first, but then it gets to be fun. You bounce along behind a motor boat on a styrofoam board. When you're really brave you stand up on the board. It's just like water skiing.

We have free time until lunch. At lunch we have these crazy things that happen. One day everyone had to wear ponytails, even the cooks! The next day was monks' meal; you were not allowed to speak to anyone. Another day was backwards meal: we had dessert first! And I can't forget bums' meal, or dress-up-your-counselor day.

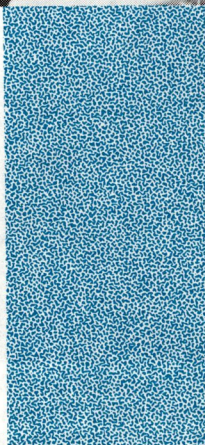
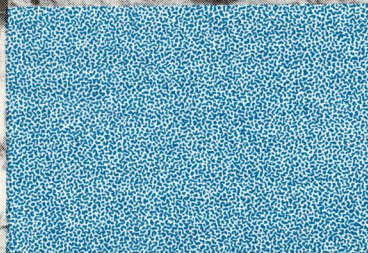
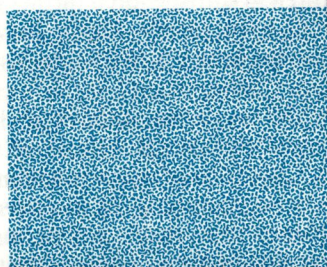
What I think everyone likes best in camp is the snack bar. You can buy anything, if your money holds out.

Then there's arts and crafts. Last year we studied Indians, and we made clay bead necklaces. After art we go swimming. Then we have supper. After supper the counselors teach various skills, like canoeing, boating, and gymnastics. I chose gymnastics.

After that we go to our cabins to get ready for campfire. We have to put on lots of mosquito spray! At campfire we sing songs and talk to Phoebe—she's a puppet who gets into lots of scrapes! By that time we are all beginning to feel sleepy. It's nice to sit and stare into the flames while we listen to a story, although the smoke gets in our eyes. After campfire we walk to our cabins, have devotions, and then get together in groups to sing "Taps" to each other. Another day is over.

My mother is the director of Camp Kahquah. She and my cousin Emmy made my stay at camp enjoyable. This year there is going to be something new at camp. Boys! Camp is going to be co-ed. I don't know what it is going to be like. I hope it will be as much fun as my first two years at Camp Kahquah. ■

Lindsay's mother, Pauline Hogan, and Ernie Giles are co-directors of Junior camp this year. Further information about children's camps and other camps at Camp Kahquah may be obtained by writing: Ernie Giles, Director of Camping, 1828 Netherby Rd., Stevensville, Ont. L0S 1S0.



Dennis Mweetwa: student and minister

by Rich Stuebing

It was January 1983, at the home of John and Esther Spurrier at Macha Hospital in Zambia, that I first met Dennis Mweetwa. Tall and good-looking, he was also friendly and polite. Looking back on that first meeting, I am sure I was not nearly as polite as he was, for after the customary handshake, I got right down to business. Esther Spurrier, who introduced us, must have been embarrassed at my failure to greet Dennis at more length, an important part of Tonga culture.

Why all the rush? We at the Theological College of Central Africa (TCCA), 400 miles north of Macha, had originally told Dennis that there was no accommodation available at TCCA for the new academic year that was to begin in two weeks' time. Then unexpectedly another student was unable to come, making one place available. I was to interview Dennis and decide on the spot if he should join us as a theological student for the next three years.

As we discussed his background, conversion and hopes for the future, I learned a lot about this young man. His home was very near Macha. His elderly father, Philemon Mwaanga, is a well-respected Christian, though a polygamist. In recent years, Dennis had not enjoyed regular fellowship with Brethren in Christ churches since he went to secondary (high) school on the Copperbelt, where no Brethren in Christ churches yet existed. (He attended an Assemblies of God church in Chingola.) Now that he had finished his secondary schooling, he wanted to go on for further training. I was impressed but still wanted another opinion.

Dr. Art Dick and his wife Helen had arrived at Macha in August 1982 and lived for a seek in Dennis' village before beginning medical work at the hospital. They had been with Dennis on numerous occasions since and were impressed enough to offer Dennis financial support if he were accepted at TCCA. After the Dicks' strong recommendation to

me, I told Dennis to come to TCCA for orientation the following week. Despite the rush and my dislike for quick decisions, experience soon proved that this decision was the right one.

Dennis' first term was not easy. The academic work was harder than he had expected. One student inferred that Dennis was only accepted at TCCA because there was a Brethren in Christ man (me!) on the faculty. He also had to make a tough decision concerning which church he should attend—the familiar Assemblies of God church close by or the church of his youth, the small, new Brethren in Christ church further away. Although I fervently hoped he would choose the latter, it had to be his decision, not mine.

By the beginning of the second term in May, Dennis had adjusted well to life at TCCA. His academic work improved (and has continued to do so ever since). He gained new friends among the students. And he threw in his lot with the fledgling Brethren in Christ church in Ndola. I was both grateful and relieved; since I had never lived in Southern Province, where the Brethren in Christ church began, I cannot speak Tonga, the mother tongue of many in the Ndola congregation. So Dennis would be a great help to me as well as to the congregation.

With the Copperbelt church planter, Rev. George Hansumo, increasingly involved in other towns outside Ndola,

Dennis and I began to preach more often. By 1984 we were team preaching through various books of the Bible. Dennis is especially adept at using Tonga illustrations, something at which I am very limited! He also translates my English into Tonga when that is thought to be necessary. (Sometimes all the people present understand English well enough without translation.)

Dennis is also extremely helpful in assessing the needs and direction of the Ndola Church. When he sits in on church executive committee meetings, his advice is often sought, despite his relative youth. In a culture where older people are especially respected for their wisdom, Dennis' opinions are equally respected. I often seek his advice on church matters myself.

God willing, Dennis will complete his Diploma of Theology studies in December 1985. What is next? Nothing is certain at this point, but there are several possibilities. Positions for pastoral work are open on the Copperbelt. He could consider lecturing in Bible at Sikalongo Bible Institute. Perhaps he should continue to teach Bible in the secondary schools, as he has done several hours per week during the past year at TCCA. Please pray for Dennis and the Zambian Brethren in Christ church as this decision is made over the next few months.

A letter I received from Dennis while we are on furlough recently gave news from both TCCA and the Ndola church. In closing he added, "I thought this would keep you on your knees." That line probably goes a long way in explaining why I am so grateful that God sent Dennis Mweetwa to be my student and friend.



Howard Sikwela (center) and Dennis Mweetwa (to the left) are the two Brethren in Christ students at TCCA. With them are (from the left) Alden and Mary Long, and Miriam Stern. A member of the Messiah College faculty, Al has been teaching at TCCA during Rich Stuebing's furlough.

Having served in Zambia since 1970, Rich Stuebing now serves as vice principal of TCCA where he lectures in New Testament. This article was written on Rich and Kathy's recently completed furlough.

Brethren in Christ Missions Executive Director's Report

by Donald R. Zook

Where are we going?

As I write these words, we have just completed a meeting of the Board for World Missions. This included a review of what God has done in the past and many projections for the future.

A progress report

I thank God for his provision of both people and resources. Each decade a host of people have dedicated themselves to the cause of Christ and missions. Missionaries have gone as obedient servants to eight foreign countries. National evangelists and pastors have planted churches in hard places. Full-time and self-supporting lay workers and clergy have labored together in many different locations to evangelize and then to disciple believers.

Sometimes it is helpful to view God's working over a period of time. Listed below are church membership statistics as reported by our overseas churches for the year of 1980 and 1983.

	1980	1983
Cuba	*	50
India	1,264	1,616
Japan	158	173
Nicaragua	522	1,182
Zambia	2,867	3,655
Zimbabwe	3,424	5,184
Total	8,235	11,860

This indicates an increase of 40 percent over the three-year period. Interim reports from these countries indicate that the 1984 membership will probably be in the 13,000-14,000 range. It is quite possible that the overseas membership will double in six years. God is building his church. Let's just praise the Lord!

Reasons for growth

Several factors contributed to the growth of our overseas Brethren in Christ churches during the past several years.

*Figures not available

1. *A movement of the Holy Spirit and enthusiastic evangelistic efforts by both missionaries and national leaders in Nicaragua, Zimbabwe, India, and Japan.* Plans for evangelism and church plantings were prayerfully made in each country in consultation with Roy Sider, our Secretary of Overseas Ministries. In several areas God arranged circumstances and motivated people and did abundantly more than either our plans or our prayers called for. We don't plan or pray for the kind of turmoil that has occurred in recent years in Nicaragua and Zimbabwe. But God is using his committed servants in these countries to witness during crises, and God is building his church.

2. *The decisions made at the Brethren in Christ General Conferences in 1976, 1978, and 1980 to expand the overseas outreach.* The corresponding support from congregations and individuals in North America have provided financial resources for growth.

3. *The development of three levels of missionary support* has enabled dollars given for missions to support more people. These levels are briefly described below.

a. *Maintenance.* A basic maintenance level of support is provided for all missionaries during their first three-year term and for those beyond the initial term who voluntarily wish to be supported at this level. This provides for basic needs through careful budgeting.

b. *Partnership.* This is for persons in the professions such as education and medicine who earn grants or salaries and who serve longer than a three-year term. If the income they earn is below that provided those on maintenance support, mission funds are used to make up the difference. They also are guaranteed a resettlement allowance equal to 25 percent of the annual maintenance support. This significantly stretches mission dollars and does not appear to cause hardship or attrition in the missionary ranks.

c. *Salary.* This level of support is provided for longer-term missionaries in more direct church-related ministries such as church planting. The salary schedule is that recommended by the Board of Administration for beginning pastors. Cost-of-living adjustments are made for the particular country in which the missionary serves. No increments are given for years of service or educational attainments.

Current activities

During 1984, 667 presentations were made by Brethren in Christ Missions personnel to congregations in the United States and Canada. In 1984 there were 1,275 people who committed themselves to pray daily for the people in Brethren in Christ Missions and the rest of Christ's global cause. Some of us gave large sums out of our abundance. Others, like the retired missionary who instructed us to discontinue her \$63 per month pension check, gave sacrificially so the gospel could be advanced.

In keeping with the mandate and approval of General Conference, church-planting ministries are underway in Venezuela and Colombia. A new work beginning in London is planned for the latter part of 1985.

Indigenization is proceeding in a very encouraging manner in Zambia. This will result in reduced missionary personnel assignments and funding, thus freeing more resources for other geographical areas.

Both the Board for World Missions and the Executive Board in Zimbabwe have agreed on the principle of partnership for a new missionary venture in the country of Malawi. Communication about timing and terms of reference for a cooperative effort are continuing.

There is marked acceleration of reaching people for Christ. The national churches of Japan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are in charge of these urban church-planting projects and are utilizing Brethren in Christ Missions resources according to a partnership agreement. In India, special efforts are focusing on evangelism in the more remote rural areas.

In Zambia and Zimbabwe, there is a three-year plan of cooperative support where emerging congregations assume full responsibility by the beginning of the fourth year. In Japan, no overseas missions support is given for national pastors.

Increased attention is currently given to the training of national leaders. This

Ethiopia: a church amidst oppression

by Arlene Schuiteman

Arlene Schuiteman, of Sioux Center, Iowa, is tutor-in-charge of the nurses' training school at Macha Hospital. She was the daughter of missionaries in Ethiopia and the Sudan. She has served for many years under the mission program of the Reformed Church in America. Doors closed in Ethiopia where she was serving and she was no longer able to stay. After one contract at an Anglican Hospital in the Eastern Province of Zambia, God brought her to Macha through Dave and Jeannie Byer. She is now beginning her second term of service. Her wisdom, maturity, and experience have greatly benefited the training program there; her deep spiritual commitment and concern inspire and help many who endeavor to follow Christ.

The following article is taken from a talk she gave on Sunday, October 28, 1984, in the Macha Church.

I greet you all in the name of Jesus, whom we worship today. Because I lived and worked in the country of Ethiopia for 11 years, I have been asked to share a bit about the lives of Christians in that country.

This is a good time to think about that country in contrast to Zambia. We have just celebrated the 20th anniversary of Zambia's independence. We have heard much about the unity and freedom of speech and worship we enjoy here. But in many parts of the world, things are not the same.

Ethiopia never was under the domination of a colonial power. It is a very old nation. In 1 Kings 10, we read the story of the Queen of Sheba coming to visit King Solomon. In the book of Acts we have the wonderful story of the Apostle Philip's following the direction of an angel to go to a certain road, meeting there an Ethiopian from the treasury department who was unable to understand the Scripture passage in Isaiah he was trying to read. Philip took the opportunity to explain the good news about Jesus. The Ethiopian believed, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing! This may be the way the news of salvation reached Ethiopia.

From early beginnings, a strong orthodox church grew. Churches were built

out of rock in the shape of the cross high in the mountains. Orders of priests translated the Bible into Geez, the holy language which only they could read and interpret to the people. As years passed and the people could not feed upon the Word of God, the religion grew dry and became a meaningless ritual.

When I arrived in Ethiopia in 1966, missionaries had been working in that country for a number of years. I found many different churches and a number of people who had been baptized and called themselves Christian, but who were not serious about following Jesus. Even church leaders were often weak and immoral. Efforts to unite different church groups only produced conflict. One missionary in the capital city of Addis Ababa decided to build a church in the city after the pattern of the old rock churches in the mountains. Some of us questioned his idea saying, "Shouldn't one have a body of believers *before* one builds a building?" I visited that church after its completion; there were so few worshipers that the front few rows were curtained off so the congregation would not seem lost in the large room.

But out in the country, in Mettu (where I was living), the Holy Spirit was at work. People were praying and lives

were being changed by the power of God. Miracles were seen.

Then came the revolution. Emperor Haile Selassie was deposed and political parties began to struggle. There came many changes and many people died. The country finally fell under Marxist control in 1974; the philosophy of scientific socialism would now dominate.

In 1977, when I left Ethiopia, many Christians were in prison—pastors, evangelists, choir members, and many others. The political leaders had decided that Christians were a threat to their regime. Revival was especially strong in the secondary school; national leaders tried to combat this by inducting young people for military training and indoctrination. Churches were closed and symbols of worship such as altars, pulpits, and musical instruments were taken away. Local government agents began a program to disturb those services that were permitted (some churches were not closed, so that the government could point to them as an indication of religious freedom). Compulsory political meetings were held at times of worship services, so Christians had to continually shift their meeting times and pass the word. Christians could no longer walk with one foot in the world and the other in the church. "I have decided to follow Jesus" became very serious words.

Even during those difficult times we could see the hand of God at work on our behalf. During one service, when some men came to disrupt the worship,



Arlene Schuiteman (center) sees to the needs of a patient at Macha Mission Hospital.

some bees that were living in a tree outside the church—and had never disturbed people before—suddenly swarmed down and began stinging the men so that they ran off.

In March 1984, friends invited me to visit Ethiopia again on my way home from my second government contract in Zambia. Was this possible? How could I get a visa since there was no Ethiopian embassy in Lusaka? The Lord worked out the details and I was able to spend 10 days in Addis Ababa—including two Sundays.

Many churches are now closed, but miraculously, that church in Addis Ababa which had been built patterned after the old orthodox ones was still open. This Sunday there was no need to curtain off the front pews. The church was packed—aisles full and children sitting all over the floor in the front! Choirs were singing, and the priests chanted the Scriptures in Amharic, the language of the people.

Times of worship were now precious to these people. Every three months they set aside a three-day period for prayer and fasting. The Sunday afternoon services had become so packed that people had to sit and stand all over the outside compound as well as inside the church. This service was suspended for fear the crowds would call too much attention to the worship from government officials.

I visited overnight in the home of friends. In the sitting room, along with the soft furniture, there stood a pulpit where the mother or father leads prayers for the family and neighbors. We call this the underground church. One time an Ethiopian Airlines hostess accepted Christ and then was baptized in the bathtub of the home!

Another friend had just been released after seven years in prison—all the time I had been travelling and working in different places, he had been confined to a cell!

These days in Ethiopia, Christians need to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. I am reminded of a verse from Psalm 68, "Let Ethiopia hasten to stretch out her hands to God" (v. 31 RSV). Many there are worshipping God today—some in churches which are still open, some in prison, some in secret. Let us remember to pray for them and to thank God for our freedom. Let us also ask him to prepare us for persecution if we are ever led down that difficult path.

is the primary use of funds from North America for the church in Nicaragua, where enthusiasm in evangelism has resulted in church congregations needing nurture and discipleship training.

Finances

At the end of 1984, we found that receipts for the year were \$450,000 short of budget. This shortfall has reduced the amount of funds we were hoping to allocate for capital in Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Japan. This will have a long-term effect on our ministries, particularly on the progress of urban church-planting and evangelism projects planned for these countries. It also will affect our plans to purchase missionary housing. Because some facilities will now be rented instead of purchased, operating costs for future years will be higher than we had previously expected.

All 1984 operating costs were covered, and we were able to close the books for 1984 without a deficit. This was possible because of delay in implementing some new programs, such as International Placement Service. It was also possible because of the exceptional buoyancy of the U.S. dollar against other world currencies. This was particularly evident in countries such as Venezuela, Zambia, and Zimbabwe which wrestle with huge international debts. At such time as the exchange rate reverts to a more normal level, the effect will be immediately felt on our operational budgets.

Through a partnership arrangement, mission capital funds are added to national church funds for selected projects which have been approved by both the overseas churches and Brethren in Christ Missions. Capital funds raised in North America are generally retained by the Board for World Missions until such time as agreements are reached with the particular national church regarding a specific project. This is usually an urban church/parsonage facility or leadership training facilities. Capital funds are also used for missionary residences and furnishings. Capital funds, unless designated for a particular project by the donor, are not made available until the year following their receipt.

Prayer requests

Please pray with us for the people involved in Brethren in Christ Missions. We are currently in contact with more than 60 people who have expressed an interest in missions service. Some will turn away after counting the cost. Others,

because we do not have specific assignments that match their interests and talents, will serve with other missions organizations. And we will thank God for that and for the privilege of having touched their lives. Others will discern that it is God's will to remain in North America and will provide prayer and financial support. And several will find God's place of service with Brethren in Christ Missions. As I write, the following are specific personnel needed in 1985 and 1986:

- four mature, experienced single people to become part of church-planting team in London, England
- one teacher of Bible and vocational subjects for Sikalongo Bible Institute in Zambia
- three tutors for missionaries' children—Zimbabwe and Zambia
- one medical doctor for a six-month stint at Macha Hospital—Zambia
- one maintenance supervisor/consultant for Macha Hospital—Zambia
- two high school teachers of math science—Zambia and Zimbabwe
- six high school teachers—preferably math science—to teach in self-supporting positions at international schools in Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Colombia
- six - eight skilled professionals of all fields to work in secular, salaried jobs through International Placement Service in Bangkok, Thailand

Also, please pray with us that the funds approved for our 1985 program will be forthcoming. I believe that God has already provided his people in the Brethren in Christ Church with all the financial resources necessary. Pray that the Holy Spirit will enable us to share our financial resources and to enjoy the privilege of participating with our brothers and sisters overseas who are eager to engage in evangelism and discipleship.

A personal word

I want to thank each of you who have been so faithful in prayer and giving. You are a channel for God's supply in our day, and I am grateful. Please pray with me that God will abundantly supply for his people so that we in turn can give joyfully and liberally according to 2 Corinthians 9. We must not rest content with past accomplishments. It is time to press toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Donald R. Zook is executive director of the Board for World Missions.

Virtue Versus Christ

Marlin Zook, Tokyo, Japan

The Japanese, in many ways, are virtuous people. There is little stealing. Drugs are scarce. Killings are few when compared with other countries. The people are polite and courteous. From the viewpoint of ethics, it seems to be less "sinful" than America. But virtue can be just as effective, perhaps even more so, in keeping people from repentance and salvation.

When people have a good life and things are going well, especially when they are "good" people, they are not interested in risking disrupting their present life for the sake of the gospel. As one woman said in reply to an invitation to be baptized, "I would like to keep staying in these present circumstances." She said that she was not "brave enough" to make a change.

Last fall I was invited by the city of Fuchu to teach an English class for ladies. They advertised in the city paper and invited people to join the class. Twenty ladies joined the introductory set of eight, two-hour sessions. After this period, it was suggested that they form a "self-study circle." They asked me to continue to teach them. I said that I would teach if we could study English for one hour and then spend the second hour talking in Japanese about the meaning of life. This was accepted by the class, and during the month of January we met for three sessions. There are 16 ladies who have continued to study. I enjoy the class, and they work hard to learn English. They have not responded as enthusiastically to the second part, but we have done some fun things that help them to stop and think about the way they are living and the basis for their lives. Part of the resistance, I think, stems from the newness. They just haven't stopped to think about their lives and the basis for living as they do.

I am also involved in a class which attempts to bridge the gap that seems to exist between the Bible classes and the church. We are looking at the Christian life and church life. What does it mean to be a Christian? What does it mean to be a member of the church? There are four ladies in this class, all of whom have been attending the Bible classes but have

not been baptized. Through this class, will some of them make a clear commitment to Christ and his church? Please pray earnestly for me in this adventure because of the strangle-hold of "virtue" which keeps many from taking this step.

Recently I have started working with two seminary students to help them think about who they are and what they are called to be. One of the first things that I am doing with them is to help them become aware of the goal that Christ had in calling them so that they can participate with Christ in aiming toward that goal as Paul did in Philippians 3:12. Pray for us in these avenues of ministry.



Members of the Ogawa ladies' English class. Social gatherings build close relationships.

India—exciting statistics

In the October 1984 issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*, we learned that church planter Pramod Roul was leading a team of evangelists to work among the Kondhos, a primitive tribal group, in Orissa. We prayed for the 150 families who had chosen to follow Christ. In the January 1985 issue of the *Intercessor*, we learned that 60 of these families belonged to the village of Mahadim, and we prayed for church planter Abraham Lima, that he might be able to disciple them in the Christian faith. Our leaders contact 21 points among the Kondhos. What has God wrought! What a challenge to prayer for laborers that these people may be taught to observe all that Christ has commanded!

However, the enemy is not asleep. The Hindus in Orissa are militant and

Christians are subject to persecution. Pray that they will stand firm, that the harvest will continue, and that the church planters will continue to be courageous for Christ.

Church planting has also been taking place in three areas in north Bihar. Growth is slow in some, rapid in others, but in all the gospel is producing fruit and growing. At Murmala, 15 have been baptized. A church structure is being built in Sikhasan. In the Supaul area where we have been working for three years, one person has been baptized. In November a whole family was baptized—husband and wife and the wife's father and mother. The church planters, Samuel Hembrom, Moses Marandi, Johan Marandi, Josiah Basara, and Vidhianand Tudu, often go in a group of three to sing, preach and testify. In Charari, 25 kilometers from Purnea, a husband and wife have been baptized. They are now part of an existing congregation. We believe God wants a Brethren in Christ church planted there. Will we pray?

Barnabas Minz, chairman of the church board, has baptized seven families and begun a new church in Old Malda District, West Bengal. There are about 13 members. He is pastor of a church among the Uraon people but his concern goes beyond them. He is also working among the tribal people of West Bengal who are neither of the Santal nor Uraon peoples. These new believers have been attending an established church for several months. Here is another place for starting a Brethren in Christ congregation soon.

The gospel continues to grow in Nepal. In 1983 there were 54 people baptized and added to the existing church, in 1984 about 30 more. Binod Kachhap and Samuel Hembrom are ministering in three areas of eastern Nepal. A new congregation has started in Malparasi on the Nepal/India border. Approximately 300 Christians have been baptized in Nepal since church planting began in 1980.

Through the witness of church planters and believers, the gospel is producing fruit and growing. Let us pray that it grow exceedingly so that the words may be repeated over and over, "What has God wrought!" Pray for the witnesses.

Shop Attendant Receives Christ

VENEZUELA—The Lord is blessing the ministry of the Gilmores in the Montalban area of Caracas, and the Gileses in the San Juan area.

In the San Juan area, Bible study with a shop attendant led to his praying to receive Christ in January. A felt need for prayer by a family for their sick children has led to the beginning of another Bible study with this family in the building where the Giles live.

Martha Giles's English school for children in their apartment building has expanded into a Sunday school with the help of a Venezuelan lady. The Christmas program was attended by 34 people, including parents.

In their apartment the Gilmores started a family worship service with a Venezuelan family on Sunday in mid-January. This complements the Sunday school started in 1984. The attendance has grown to between 15 and 20 each Sunday. The interest in this family worship service is encouraging.

We praise the Lord for the achievement of solid progress in 1984. The Lord has blessed the Gilmores' ministry with a group of interested people. Some have expressed faith in Christ and others are showing interest.

Sharing in Celebration

Bob Geiger, Bogota, Colombia

Carol and I have a special praise. Ever since we went to the *Novera* (a nine-day celebration preceding Christmas), we have had a lot of extremely good social contacts. We can move freely in and out of the houses of at least four families, as well as the home of an owner of a laundromat. One of our advisors told us that it has taken him five years to learn to know his neighbors well enough so that they feel free to go to each other's houses. So God has really worked to open people's homes for us. Now my prayer is, "Give me boldness to proclaim the gospel."

The laundromat owner regularly sits down with me and asks questions from the Scripture. Other Christians have also been talking with him. So God is using many vessels to reach this man.

Carol has a ministry with a woman who firmly believes a mixture of spiritism and Catholic doctrine. But she is very much attracted to our thoughts on Christianity and is asking many questions. Prayer could make a difference.



Veranda of a classroom at the Bible institute on a chilly day.

Change but not decay

Since 1968, Sikalongo Bible Institute has been training leaders for the Brethren in Christ Church in Zambia. Myron Taylor, the founder of Sikalongo Mission, chose a beautiful location just above the rugged escarpment along the edge of the Zambezi valley. There he preached and from there he journeyed to surrounding areas to preach the message of salvation. Some responded and a school was opened to teach them to read. On one of his preaching missions down into the valley he was wounded in an encounter with a lion and died a few days later. But a school had been opened and the work begun.

Many changes have taken place since that time. The school grew and Sikalongo Mission became famous for its upper primary boys' school. Many of her sons have done well in the professions. When Sikalongo Bible Institute opened in 1968, the boys' boarding was being phased out and the school became a day school for both boys and girls. Since the primary school program had also been shortened to seven years, the extra classroom was available for use by the Bible institute. In 1980, the institute moved into its own beautiful new facilities. In 1982, the upper primary classes were transferred to the location of the lower school, making it a full primary school. Through a community self-help scheme the people enlarged the old classrooms and built new ones. Sikalongo Secondary School opened in 1983.

Change continues at Sikalongo Bible Institute. It opened with a two-year course, hoping soon to expand to a three-year program. However, the two-year course has continued to the present time. The last two-year class will complete their course at the end of 1985.

The Bible institute program is now in transition with a new class beginning a four-year program. The first two years in residence includes five three-hour courses per term plus training in work skills: carpentry, mechanical work, welding, gardening, animal care, care of the orchard, etc. This is not intended as preparation for a professional job but to help them support themselves both during their course and later. The third year is a supervised internship at a church, and the fourth is advanced study for spiritual and ministry development. Five new full-time students have enrolled in the four-year program, and six others are completing the two-year course.

As interim principal, Dr. Fred Holland is deeply involved in this transition—in evaluating, planning and implementing the necessary changes by which the Bible institute will be better able to serve the church. One important aspect of this transition is the transfer of administration from missionary personnel to national leadership. Yotham Sikwangala is the Zambian principal-designate. For Yotham, 1985 is a year of study and training under Fred's supervision. They have developed a good unity and are working together on the new study-work curriculum. Moves are being made to show the Sikalongo community the shift from missionary to Zambian administration. Pray for the Lord's continued guidance as they implement the expanded four-year program and help the institute toward less dependence on overseas monies.

Many changes have been made and are being made, but we believe they indicate life and progress, not decay. ■

church news

MMA sharing grants assist 16 Brethren in Christ

In the Brethren in Christ Church, 16 members received \$6,200 in Mutual Aid Sharing Fund grants from Mennonite Mutual Aid during 1984.

Of this total, six members received grants for medical expenses through the Catastrophe Aid program. Eight members participated in the Special Premium Needs and Special Dependent Adult programs, which assist with medical premiums.

In addition, a member received a grant to help with adoption expenses, and an overseas church worker was assisted with life insurance premiums.

MMA's sharing programs are designed to work with congregations to meet members' needs. "MMA provides an organized system of sharing for a broad community of members," says John Liechty, Fraternal Activities Manager. "These programs illustrate the partnership between MMA and the church."

MMA started the above-contract programs because of its tax-exempt status as a fraternal organization. Instead of paying taxes, MMA uses these funds for mutual aid efforts.

Fourth Annual Heritage Service

Historic Ringgold Meeting House, Ringgold, Maryland

**June 2, 1985
3:00 p.m.**

Graybill Brubaker will preach, Ronald Miller will lead the singing. The order of service will reflect the mode of worship during the early years of the brotherhood.

Robert Lehman joins Messiah Village staff

Rev. J. Robert Lehman of Mt. Joy, Pa., has been named Director of the Department of Pastoral Care, beginning this ministry April 1, 1985.

Rev. Lehman, with his wife Agnes Cober Lehman, served with Brethren in Christ Missions in Africa from 1956 to 1970. Graduating from Messiah College in 1951, he has pastored a number of Brethren in Christ congregations: Valley Chapel in Ohio, Morning Hour, Clear Creek, and Palmyra in Pennsylvania.



With his broad experience in missions, pastoral ministries, and most recently, as a member of the Board of Deacons at Elizabethtown, in addition to his practical experience as an electrician with his father, Rev. Lehman is expected to have a fruitful ministry at Messiah Village.

Curtis Book ordained in Zimbabwe

Curtis Book was ordained to the ministry on January 20, 1985, at the Mtshabezi Mission in Zimbabwe. His father, Rev. Alvin Book, gave the ordination message, and Bishop Stephen Ndlovu performed the ordination rite. Former Bishop P. M. Kumalo gave the charge. (A related article is on p. 8.)

On furlough from Ekuphileni Bible Institute, Curt and Leslie are in Cincinnati where Tandi, their youngest daughter, is being treated for burns suffered just before they left Zimbabwe.

Maintenance Position Open

Camp Lakeview is receiving applications for the position of "Maintenance Person." This position is open Sept. 2, 1985. Please reply to Ronald Slabaugh, 2450 W. Snover Rd., Sandusky, MI. 48471

Allegheny Conference

On Sunday, March 10, the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., held a dedication service for their new piano, which was given by an anonymous donor. • Six persons from the **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation recently completed a teacher training course. Two of them had perfect attendance.

The **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., recently installed two lay-ministers, William Landis and Glenn Stoner. • A missionary challenge was presented by Richard Steubing to the **Cedar Heights** congregation, Mill Hall, Pa.

An international fellowship meal was held by the **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation recently. • The **Hanover**, Pa., congregation installed Jim Schrum as Minister of Lay Evangelism.



On Sunday, Jan. 13, **Samuel and Cora Bert** were honored by family and friends at a 50th wedding anniversary celebration held at the Mt. Rock Brethren in Christ Church, Shippensburg, Pa. The Berts are members of the Mechanicsburg, Pa., congregation.

Five persons were received into membership recently, reports the **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., congregation. • A week of deeper life services were held by the **Montgomery** congregation, Mercersburg, Pa. The evangelist was Rev. Kermit Farlow from Sophia, N.C.

The **Peace Light** congregation, Gettysburg, Pa., has purchased their first permanent building. The group has been averaging over 60 in their worship services.

Atlantic Conference

More than thirty couples attended a marriage enrichment conference at the **Free Grace Church**, Millersburg, Pa. The resource couple was Dr. David and Joyce Lehman. • Two young men from the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation shared Sunday night, April 14, concerning their recent missions assignments. Thom Hoffman will be serving a two-year assignment with Food for the Hungry and Greg Nissley will be working with Trans World Radio in Swaziland.

A couple from the **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation provided pew Bibles for the sanctuary. • The **Souderton**, Pa., congregation held a Christian Living Seminar on March 14-16.

Canadian Conference

A fellowship meal was held by the **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont., to show appreciation to Harold and Verna Heise for their seven years of service as deacon. • The **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., hosted a joint hymn sing with the Bridlewood congregation. Refreshments were served following the evening service.



Howard and Elva Fretz were honored at a recent open house held at the Lions Hall in Ridgeway, Ontario, celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary. Active in both regional conference and MCC ministries, they are members of the Falls View Brethren in Christ Church.

Charles Ansell was recently installed as Lay Minister for Congregational Life by the **Meadowvale** congregation, Mississauga, Ont. • The **Rosebank**, Ontario, congregation reports holding a Bible conference with guest speaker Rev. Gordon Gooderham.

Central Conference

The **Bethel** congregation, Merrill, Mi., reports that Fannie Longenecker was their missionary speaker on Sunday morning, March 10. • Bob and Luanne Verno were installed recently as the pastoral couple of the **Fairview** congregation, Englewood, Oh.

Steve Ginder, student of Asbury Seminary, is assisting Rev. Glenn Hensel of the **Millerfields** congregation, Columbia, Ky. • A group of young people from the **Sheboygan**, Wi., congregation, have formed a singing group—The S.O.S. (Shout Out Salvation). They minister to elderly people in local nursing homes.

The **Valley Chapel** congregation, Canton, Oh., hosted a hymn sing for the northern Ohio churches on Sunday evening, March 31.

Midwest Conference

A drama team from Central College presented a one-act play to the **Abilene**, Ks., congregation during the Sunday school hour on March 10.

Over 135 persons attended a neighbor night supper, hosted by the **Bethany** congregation, Ok. After a meal, the film *Joni* was shown and new sound equipment given in memory of H. V. Jones was dedicated.

The film series, "Out of the Saltshaker" was viewed by the **Mountain View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Co., during March and April.

Pacific Congregation

The **Labish** congregation, Salem, Or., viewed a Child Evangelism film, "Children Crying in the Streets." • A celebration, "Noah's Ark Finale," was presented to the **Upland**, Ca., congregation, Sunday evening, March 24. Slides, songs, and library awards were part of the celebration.

For The Record...

Births

Abbott: Jonathan Murray, Jan. 17; Murray and Bev Abbott, Houghton congregation, Langton, Ont.

Ashby: Caroline Kristin, Feb. 25; Rev. Ed and Patricia Ashby, Highland congregation, Oh.

Balzer: Seagan Kaye, Feb. 23; Craig and Debbie Balzer, Christian Union congregation, In.

Bordner: Lauren Nicole, Dec. 28; Bill and Tammy Bordner, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Cober: Crista Lynn, Feb. 5; Peter and Lynn Cober, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

Dagan: Anthony Eugene, Feb. 2; Steve and Wanda Dagan, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Dewalt: Craig Allen II, Jan. 29; Craig and Wendy Dewalt, Fairland congregation, Pa.

Eigenbrode: Heidi Sue, Feb. 19; Dave and Beth Eigenbrode, Waynesboro congregation, Pa.

Enders: Timothy David, Feb. 23; Dave and Kathy Enders, Manor congregation, Pa.

Ertley: Daniel Brandon, Feb. 17; Don and Cathy Ertley, Manor congregation, Pa.

Etzweiler: Brian Kyle, Jan. 25; Terry and Natalie Etzweiler, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Hess: Kehley Michelle, Nov. 10; Ray and Cindy Hess, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Hiebert: Kimberly Dawn, Jan. 23; Duane and Deborah (Welch) Hiebert, Houghton congregation, Ont.

Kendig: Robin Elizabeth, Feb. 25; John and Jeanette Kendig, Lancaster congregation, Pa.

Leaver: Stephanie Denise, Oct. 15; Randy and Tina Leaver, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Martin: Michal Sue, Feb. 20; Raymond and Sarah (Carbaugh) Martin, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

Lehman: Gregg Taylor, Feb. 1; Gregg and Marilyn Lehman, Manor congregation, Pa.

Myers: Zachariah David, Feb. 7; Rory and Novella (Clymans) Myers, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

Radmore: Amy Lee, Jan. 19; George and Marilyn (Whitby) Radmore, Houghton congregation, Langton, Ont.

Schreiber: Troy Allen, Jan. 19; Calvin and Amanda Schreiber, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Shannon: Angelina Marie, Feb. 11; Ronald and Jaylene (Musser) Shannon, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

VanderPlate: Jordan Allen, Feb. 24; Bob and Barb VanderPlate, Manor congregation, Pa.

Weaver: Katrina Diane, Feb. 8; John and Margaret (Helmuth) Weaver, Nappanee congregation, In.

Witter: Benjamin David, Nov. 30; Michael and Robin Witter, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Books-Kramer: Miriam Kramer, Lebanon, Pa., and Theodore Books, Cleona, Pa., Nov. 24 in the Fairland Brethren in Christ Church with Revs. William Hess and Earl Musser officiating.

Falls-Robb: Denise, daughter of Earl and Myrtle Robb, Millheim, Pa., and David, son of Russel and Hazel Falls, Avis, Pa., March 2 in the Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating.

Hollett-Bergeron: Suzanne Louise, daughter

Camp Freedom Report—1985

"And in that day thou shalt say, Oh Lord, I will praise Thee." While we at Camp Freedom (St. Petersburg, Fla.) do not formally have a theme for each camp meeting, this was a theme that followed day after day. The director opened the session by saying, "In that day shalt ye say . . ." Then the people responded, "Praise the Lord."

There were some missing from camp. We note two: John & Maurine Rosenberry were both hospitalized due to an accident on their way to camp. Brother John is assistant director. Sister Maurine was involved in hospitality. They were missed very much. But God was there, and the camp moved along very smoothly.

My report this year will include excerpts from testimonials:

"There was a good spirit on the camp. I appreciated once again the strong preaching of the truth of the Word. If I could sum up the gist of the messages, I think it would be in one word, "service." The general thought of the speakers seemed to be that we prepare

ourselves and submit ourselves to a life of holy living and service to others."

"The dynamic preaching of Rob French and Kenneth Smith, evangelists, complemented each other well. Brother H. E. Schmul captivated the audience with his anointed preaching. I appreciated the "Gessners" as they chose songs by the Holy Spirit's direction."

"Mission's Day was exciting. Representatives from Spanish missions, Evangelistic Faith Mission and Brethren in Christ missions participated. A number of the youth of the camp committed their lives to God's will for their future."

"All of the camp was enjoyable with seasonable weather and beautiful days. Much prayer went up to God that He would be pleased with every aspect of the camp. He surely has not failed us."

Plan now to attend the 1986 camp. Rev. Dale Yocum and Rev. Henry Landis will serve as co-evangelists. The David Fullers are booked as musicians. The dates are January 22 to February 2.

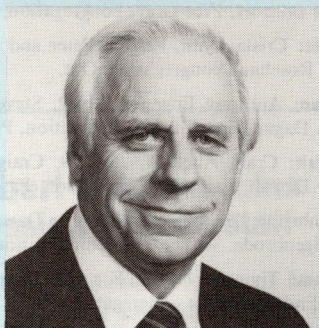
Simon A. Lehman, Jr.

Director

stewardship

Ira M. Eyster fills new role

by Paul Hostetler



Dr. Ira M. Eyster of Norman, Oklahoma, has been named to serve the brotherhood as the Executive Director of Planned Giving, beginning in May. He was selected for the position by the Board of Administration, and will serve on behalf of the various denominational ministries.

Planned giving, sometimes called deferred giving, involves contributions made to charitable causes by way of annuities, trusts, wills, gifts, and other investments.

Presently serving as a field representative of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance, Dr. Eyster has organized estate planning seminars in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Ohio. He has completed eight seminars of training conducted by the National Planned Giving Institute. His contacts, experience and training will prove very beneficial in his new role.

His many other ministries in the church, first as president of Jabbok Bible School in Thomas, Oklahoma (1949-55), have given him an additional base of acquaintance and trust. In subsequent years Dr. Eyster has variously served on the Board of Christian Education, the Board for Schools and Colleges, The Messiah College Board of Trustees and is currently assistant chairman of the Board for Media Ministries. In the opening year of Cooperative Ministries, he was the stewardship promotion chairman of the the Midwest Regional Conference.

He is presently the coordinator of evangelism and the treasurer in his home church in Oklahoma City. He has been significantly involved in the development and planning of the Oklahoma City Brethren in Christ Church.

A graduate of Jabbok Bible School, he has a junior college degree from Upland College. His Ph.D. degree is from the University of Oklahoma, where he served in an administrative role and taught during the years 1967-82.

Dr. Eyster has directed a national teacher education project along with numerous state wide education projects in the areas of legal, multi-cultural, and human rights education. He has received national, state and university recognition for professional achievement and excellence in these fields.

Now retired from teaching, Dr. Eyster has joined the "Social Security Circle." He is therefore able to give full-time service to the church at minimal compensation. Surely the Lord will use this dedicated, qualified brother to help us find ways to be better stewards of our financial resources.

His good example is a reminder to all of us that we should be giving consideration to the possibility of volunteering, or giving low-cost service to the church in our retirement years (earlier in life may be even better). We should also inform church leaders about people we know who might be interested in such service. As we give ourselves in this way, overhead expenses are reduced and many dollars are freed to underwrite additional ministry programs.

This concept, of course, is not new. Persons like Abram Brubaker, Sam Minter, Katie Tyson, and Albert Breneman are among those who have led the way. The general treasurer, Harold Chubb, is another who gives many hours of competent work to the brotherhood without compensation.

Others could be mentioned, but these should stimulate your thinking. Might God be asking you to serve in this way?

of Mr. and Mrs. F. Bergeron, and G. Wayne, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arch Hollett, both Scarborough, Ont., March 9 in the Bridlewood Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard J. Chester officiating.

McGarvey-Keith: Cynthia Marie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Keith, Blandburg, Pa., and Randy Scott, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGarvey, Hollentown, Pa., Feb. 9 in the Blandburg Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. J. Richard Lehman officiating.

Shoecraft-Hill: Cheryl Kay, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Paul Hill, Upland, Ca., and Milton C., son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shoecraft, Pasadena, Ca., Dec. 22 in Pasadena with father of the bride officiating.

Stover-O'Hara: Jody Ann O'Hara and Calvin Wade Stover, Nov. 10 in the Green Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Thomas A. Bouch officiating.

Taylor-Luse: Karen Rebecca Luse, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Tice, and Maurice Wilbur Taylor, Bellefonte, Pa., Jan. 12 in the Green Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Thomas A. Bouch officiating.

Obituaries

Berry: Mabel B. Berry, Breckenridge, Mi., born July 8, 1893, died March 1, 1985. She is survived by 2 children; 7 grandchildren; 2 step-grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. Rev. Bedsaul Agee conducted the funeral service. Interment was in Ridgeland Cemetery.

Brown: Willie Belle Shepherd Brown, Russell Springs, Ky., born March 16, 1903, died March 1, 1985. She was married to Alvin Brown who survives. Also surviving are a daughter, Mildred Emerson; and two sons: Alvin L. and Fred. Rev. Edgar Giles conducted the funeral service in the Millerfields Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in Tarter Cemetery.

Ferguson: Erla Ferguson, Collingwood, Ont., born Aug. 6, 1919, died Jan. 26, 1985. She was preceded in death by her husband, Frank, and son, Robert. She is survived by two daughters: Joan Scrannage and Marie; a son, David; five grandchildren; a brother, William Bowins; and a sister, Wilma Bell. She was a member of the New Life Brethren in Christ Church.

Kennedy: Ralph F. Kennedy, Greencastle, Pa., died Feb. 11, 1985 in Avon Park, Fl., at the age of 74. He was the son of Warren and Mary Maun Kennedy. He was married to Anna Mary Hykes Kennedy who preceded him in death in 1976. He married Hazel Ritchey who survives. Also surviving are 10 children: Norma F., Louisa Bair, Paul O., Dorothy Martin, Samuel W., Jerome L., Isaac J., Ronald, Philip E., and Charles Ray; 37 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and 2 stepchildren. He was a member of the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Wilbur W. Benner. Interment was in Brown's Mill Cemetery.

Lehman: A. Arthur Lehman, Chambersburg, Pa., born Oct. 9, 1907, died Feb. 9, 1985. He is survived by his wife, Bertha Cauffman Lehman; three daughters; seven brothers and sisters; six grandchildren; and a great-grandchild. He was a member of the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Revs. A. G. Brubaker and Michael E. Knowles. Interment was in Chambersburg Mennonite Cemetery.

Messiah College News

Seventy-fifth Commencement

Celebrating the conclusion of four years of diligent study, 355 graduating seniors will receive bachelor's degrees at Messiah's Seventy-fifth Annual Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 11. Attorney William Ball of Harrisburg, PA, widely respected for his success in defending First Amendment religious freedom, has been selected as the speaker for the Commencement ceremony.

Students assisting at Grantham Church

Three Messiah College students from the Department of Bible and Religion are regularly assisting Dr. Robert Ives, senior pastor of the Grantham Church. Dan Heitzmann, a freshman Bible major, Steady Moono, a senior Christian education major, and Lew Rinard, a junior Bible major, have helped lead the Sunday morning liturgy and have performed various duties on Sunday evenings. Dr. Ives is also conducting regular training sessions on pulpit presence and related themes with these three men.

Sports tournament a success

According to Dean L. Lehman of the Mechanicsburg congregation, the 32nd Annual Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament held at Messiah College was a definite success. Over 30 churches from the Atlantic and Allegheny Conferences participated, with nearly 1000 youth and adults playing on the teams. First and second place finishers for each sport were awarded trophies and ribbons.

The participating congregations were:

Student leader named

Sophomore Daryl Bundy of Mill Hall, PA, (Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ) has been elected student body chaplain for the 1985-1986 academic year by the Messiah College Student Association. Brethren in Christ students who have served on the 1984-1985 executive committee include Jolene Byer of Upland, California, (Upland congregation) as treasurer, and Mark Heisey of New Madison, Ohio, (Highland congregation) as chief justice.

Named to Who's Who

Karen Brubaker '86 (Arcanum, OH), Jolene Byer '86 (Upland, CA), Jeffrey Conrady '85 (Ashland, OH), Rebecca Engle '85 (Grantham, PA), Mark Heise '86 (New Madison, OH), Lucinda Oswald '85 (Fairfax, VT), and Cindy Robinson '85 (Elliottsburg, PA) were among the 37 Messiah College students named to the 1985 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*.

They were selected on the basis of academic achievement, service to the community, and leadership in extracurricular activities. Students from more than 1,500 institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several foreign nations are listed in the 1985 edition.

Concert Choir tour

During spring break, the 40-voice Messiah College Concert Choir visited 13 churches and schools in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire as part of their March 1985 tour. Directed by Dr. Larry Landis, assistant professor of music, the group was accompanied by piano and a brass ensemble. Members of the Concert Choir who are Brethren in Christ include: Emily Bulgrien, Sandusky, MI; Daryl Bundy, Mill Hall, PA; Jennifer Burkett, Mechanicsburg, PA; Donelda Davis, Grantham, PA; Doug Davis, Grantham, PA; and Melody Royer, Roaring Spring, PA.

Among the faculty

Dr. Robert Ives, College pastor and lecturer in theology, and Dr. Luke Keefer, associate professor in Bible and religion, have been selected for inclusion in the third edition of *Who's Who in Religion in America*.

Dr. David Madeira, vice president for college advancement, has been approved by the Supreme Court of the United States for admission to the Bar of the Court. He will be formally admitted during the Court's Spring 1985 term.

An article by Dr. Dean Curry, assistant professor of political science and chairman of the Department of History and Political Science, entitled "How to Think About Nuclear Weapons," was published in the March issue of *Eternity* magazine.

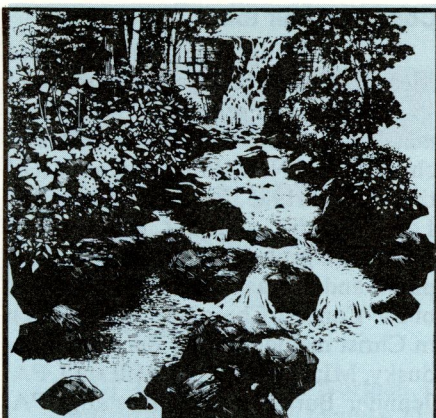
Throughout March, assistant professor of art Ted Prescott had a solo exhibit of seven crosses on display in Messiah College's Aughinbaugh Art Gallery. From three to seven feet tall, the crosses were composed of a variety of media including slate, brass, coal, neon, alabaster, and wood. Their titles ranged from "Death Cross" to "Florentine Cross."

Professor of history and English literature Dr. E. Morris Sider and Dr. John Yeatts, assistant professor of Christian education, will help Fairland Brethren in Christ Church celebrate its centennial this May as they speak at special anniversary services.

Dr. Sider and Dr. Yeatts, along with 30 other Messiah College faculty members and administrators, are available for church-related and civic speaking engagements through the Messiah College Speakers Bureau. To obtain more information, please contact the Messiah College Communications Office, Grantham, PA 17027 (717) 766-2511. ■

Tournament Results

Event	Champion	Runner-up
BASKETBALL		
"A" League	Mechanicsburg	Green Spring
"B" League	Jemison Valley	Antrim I
"C" League	Mt. Rock	Morning Hour
VOLLEYBALL		
"A" League	Chambersburg	Manor
"B" League	Antrim	Manor
BOWLING	Clarence Center	Lancaster
TABLE TENNIS	Manor	Mechanicsburg



"Share the Hope"

Daily readings that
define "hope" and
illustrate how to share it.

MAY

DAY		BOOK & CHAPTER
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	John 11:47-57
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	John 12:34-43
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	John 12:44-50
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	John 14:1-7
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	John 14:8-14
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	John 14:22-29
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	John 17:19-26
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	John 20:24-31
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Acts 8:26-38
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Romans 3:1-8
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Romans 3:21-28
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Romans 4:13-25
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Romans 10:6-12
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Romans 10:13-18
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Gal. 3:19-29
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Eph. 1:15-23
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Phil. 1:27-30
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	1 Thess. 2:9-13
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	1 Thess. 4:9-15
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	1 Tim. 1:12-19
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	1 Peter 1:13-22
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	1 Peter 2:1-7
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	1 John 3:18-24
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	1 John 5:10-15
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Daniel 6:14-23
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Matt. 8:5-13
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Luke 1:39-45
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	John 2:18-25
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 29	John 12:1-11
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	John 17:1-8
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 31	Acts 4:1-4

JUNE

DAY		BOOK & CHAPTER
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Acts 4:31-33
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Acts 11:5-18
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Acts 18:1-8
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Acts 18:24-28
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Romans 4:1-8
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	1 Cor. 15:1-10
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	1 Cor. 15:11-19
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	John 5:24-38

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readers respond

No connection?

In the March '85 issue, I failed to find any correlation between the bomb and drunkenness in J. Stoner's article. If the Bible teaches that this world will be destroyed (I believe that it does), it also teaches what we should presently be doing—telling the lost world the Good News and making disciples (Mt. 28:19) and living holy and godly lives (2 Pet. 3:11).

If tornado warnings are issued, I do not try to stop the tornado. I work to lessen the loss. Jesus said, "Don't worry about the body but rather fear the one who can cast into hell." I worry no more about the bomb coming than I worry about the sun not coming up tomorrow. When the end comes, either singularly or totally, I am to be concerned that I have been "good and faithful" (Mt. 25:23).

I have heard much about the bomb

dropped on Hiroshima but little of the bombing of Dresden, Germany, where far more people died. I hear loud noises if a murderer is to be executed, but almost nothing about the victims of those murderers. I hear much about the nuclear power plants, but little about the millions affected by cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. I see only one hope for this present evil world and the worlds to come, and that is Jesus Christ. Let's preach Christ!

J. M. Brubaker
Ickesburg, Pa.

Thanks, Onesimus

We thank God for Onesimus recalling to our memories those phases of Bible teaching through which the Brethren in Christ Church has passed [January 1985 issue], also the comments about our present state.

More than 70 years ago, I remember those gifted, Spirit-filled ministers of the gospel as they emphasized divine healing and the imminent coming of our Lord.

When that glorious event occurs, the question will be answered, for the identity of the true Brethren in Christ will be revealed as they come from the four corners of the world.

Howard Fretz
Stevensville, Ontario

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Contributions invited for Dialogue and Readers Respond

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Since each article or letter represents the view of the writer, they do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Brethren in Christ Church.

Dear Paul:

In previous letters, I have been commenting about the church in the 20th century. This month, I want to write you about a particular aspect of the North American culture today.

I would like to begin with a true story that will serve as a parable. Last fall, I was watching my son's soccer practice. (Soccer is probably the most popular sport in the world now.) As I sat and watched the practice, my daughter and several other girls were playing nearby with Barbie dolls. (I would try to explain what they are, but you would not believe me.) The girls were dressing up dolls to go out with guys on dates (another custom you would have difficulty understanding). One of the girls' mothers finally said to them, "Why do you have to go out on dates? Why don't you go out together to the V.I.P.?" Now the V.I.P. is a singles bar (a place where unmarried persons go to meet others like themselves). When I introduced myself to that mother a few minutes later, she said to me, "I hope you did not mind what I said about the V.I.P.? It's just that I know too many women my age who find themselves alone, but do not know how to be independent."

If you can peel away the cultural layers of that story (we often have to do the same with your letters today, Paul), you will gain some insight into our 20th century culture. People here value independence immensely. Women should be independent from their husbands and husbands from their wives. Children should be independent from their parents as early as possible. The elderly value financial security because it gives them independence. Congregations should be independent from denominational ties. Nations should be independent from commitments to the world community of nations. The theme for individuals, churches, and even nations is captured in a song performed by one of the most popular singers of the century: "I Did It *MY* Way!"

In the contemporary world, parents train their children to be independent. They leave their children in day care centers while they work, and rationalize it by saying that it teaches the children independence. Parents divorce, leaving the children to independently relate to

each parent and to ponder what they might have personally done to cause the divorce. Such divorces are explained by the rationalization that it is better to live without a parent than with parents that do not love one another. Some psychologists are beginning to observe the toll that forced independence is taking on our children. They are required to grow up too fast. They are faced with responsibilities that they are not mature enough to handle.

The drive for independence also affects the other end of the age spectrum. The elderly want to live alone as long as possible. They are concerned with financial security so that they will not be a burden on anyone. They spend vast amounts of money on lodging so that they will not have to be dependent on their children or on society. Even when persons cannot take care of themselves, they want to be independent.

Independence is also important to the church. The church has responded to the independence ideal by providing day care centers for children and residence facilities for the elderly. But, more important than this, the church has set the example for independence. Congregations foster their autonomy from denominational and ecumenical ties. Individual Christians cherish their personal relationship with Christ and their independent interpretation of Scripture.

Why is independence so highly valued, even among Christians? You, Paul, seemed to teach dependence and interdependence. In your letters, submission is the theme, rather than autonomy. How do you think we should deal with the notion of independence in the 20th century? I have some suggestions to which I would like to hear your response.

It seems to me that we could counter the independence of our modern world by emphasizing responsibility. This is at the essence of the word you biblical writers liked to use for love, agape. This responsibility could work itself out at a number of levels.

Individuals need to be responsible for each other. For example, parents need to be responsible for their children. Children should be in high priority for parents. In this century, it is often considered important that both parents work. Rather than fooling themselves into

thinking that this is best for the children too, parents should recognize that such an arrangement takes its toll on children. This toll should be considered when a work schedule is developed. Moreover, if both parents work, they both need to spend quality and quantity time with their children; the former does not come without the latter. If we want to develop responsible—rather than just independent—children, we should be responsible for them.

At the individual level, it is also important to take responsibility for other segments of society. The elderly need to be confident of our love and care, and they need to be willing to receive that love and care.

Responsibility is also important at a corporate level. Nations need to see their responsibility for the world. It is our responsibility as one of the wealthy nations of the world to make decisions, not just on the basis of our own self interest, but also on the basis of what is best for those nations that are dependent on us. Because we live in a global village, we must recognize that we are indeed as dependent on them for our security as they are upon us. The ideal of the independent nation looking out for its own self interest alone must be laid to rest.

Likewise, I agree with you, Paul, that the congregation of Christians must see itself as part of the larger whole. We must see ourselves as dependent on other groups of Christians in the task of witnessing to the world of our faith in Christ. An older friend of mine used to say: "Our enemies are not the Baptists, but the saloons." We should work together with the other churches to communicate Christ in our communities. We should cooperate with other denominations, even those that we think maybe "don't preach the Word." We might be refreshed to hear the gospel communicated in new forms. There is nothing praiseworthy about an independent church. We need each other to carry out the awesome task our Lord left for us to do.

In your day, Paul, the church and the culture recognized how much people depend on each other. Today, independence is our curse. Pray for us.

Onesimus

Phoebe's Journal

"Neither Male Nor Female"

When David reported that the monitor on his school bus made fun of him for taking a doll to school, I was irritated (angry even!). She teasingly declared that boys aren't supposed to play with dolls, so what was he doing with one? I think he was mad, and embarrassed, because after that he hid his doll in his backpack. He didn't want to risk being ridiculed again.

Would she have made such a fuss if a girl had taken a Matchbox car to school? My impression is that it is generally more acceptable for girls to play with traditionally "boy toys" than it is for boys to play with "girls toys." A girl who is a "tomboy" is more acceptable than a boy who is a "sissy" or "effeminate." We usually accept tomboyishness as just a phase (or even kind of endearing), but we worry that an "effeminate" boy will grow up to be socially (and sexually) maladjusted. Even our language reveals our prejudice; to my knowledge, there is no socially acceptable male equivalent for the word "tomboy."

I wonder too whether our general acceptance of girls who are tomboys or who like to play with "boy toys" indicates that we want to socialize girls to fit into a man's world. We don't want to socialize boys to fit into a woman's world because that's not where the action is. So we're uncomfortable with anything but traditional masculinity in boys.

With my own children—a girl and a boy—I find myself falling into this trap. Beth is more interested and talented in math and science, traditionally male disciplines, and she's never been one to

spend hours playing with dolls. I've accepted and encouraged her interests at least partly because I want her to be able to compete on an equal basis with men. At the same time, however, I sometimes subconsciously wish that she were more like her girl cousin who is very "motherly" because then she'd have an easier time fitting into the mold that's expected of her as a woman.

I've encouraged David to develop the caring, nurturing part that is naturally there by giving him dolls. And I love to see him take care of them kindly and lovingly. But he has only boy dolls. Also, it still *feels* better to add to his collection of action figures, robots, cars, and construction sets than to buy him another doll.

What bugs me is that I often feel caught between my comfortableness with the old traditional patterns and an uneasiness and frustration with them because they tend to divide people rather than allow them to be whole persons. So I muddle along in some middle ground. Maybe that's O.K., and maybe in that middle ground I'm even breaking some new ground for my children, but I'm often left with feelings of ambivalence that are hard to live with.

When boys are ridiculed for playing with dolls, to use that example again, they may well conclude that it's not O.K. for them to develop the nurturing, caring, feeling, dependent side of themselves. They're supposed to be logical, analytical, independent, unemotional, etc. I know that these latter qualities are ones I prize in myself, partly because they're the ones I feel I need in order to

be respected as professionally competent by male friends and colleagues. But I don't like it when I feel I have to repress my deep feelings (which might cause me to be labeled an "emotional female" if I expressed them) in order to be recognized as competent, logical, and efficient.

I think we're doing our children (not to mention ourselves, the business and political worlds, and the church) a great disservice when we perpetuate traditional ideas of what is masculine and feminine and don't allow the development of *all* positive qualities in both boys and girls, men and women. The church, for example, could be deeply enriched by more men who are caring and nurturing, and who recognize, accept, and understand their own and others' feelings and how those feelings affect relationships between people. We would also be enriched by more women who don't feel required to "act like men" to be heard, who are comfortable with themselves as women, who are not afraid—because of a feeling of incompetency—to take certain positions in the church, who are urged to develop competence, and who are respected and appreciated on an equal basis with men.

We need to consider the implications of all this for leadership in the church. I'd like to see the church model the concept that we can all be more whole, more complete, if we develop every aspect of our humanity. That's part of what I'm trying to do when I encourage David to play with dolls and Beth to pursue a career in science. It's a slow process, but one which I think is in the spirit of Paul's comment that in Christ we are neither male nor female.

Phoebe

Pontius' Puddle



A letter to Rachel

Dear Rachel:

We got a long distance telephone call last night. It was from your mother. At first, I couldn't tell why she called, but it soon became clear that something was bothering her and she didn't know how to say it. Finally, she just blurted out the news: "Rachel is pregnant. The baby is due in July. And the guy moved to Florida after he found out."

Rachel, I can't tell you how much I wanted to be there with her, and with you, at that moment. The telephone was so inadequate, even though your mother and I talked for 20 minutes or more. And this letter seems even less adequate. But I can't be there, and you don't have a telephone in your apartment, so I write.

While your mom was talking, my mind went back 20 years to the day I first saw you—just a few months old, the pride and joy of your parents. Linda and I got to see you once or twice a year, often at your grandparents' home when we stopped by for a visit. Every chance you got, you went with them to Sunday school. You were a beautiful girl, with long black hair and sparkling eyes.

And I remembered that life often has been rather difficult for you. Although you never said much (you always have been much quieter than your two younger sisters), I have had the feeling that the stresses your family experienced took a heavy toll on you. I remember suggesting to Linda that perhaps we should invite you to spend a summer or two with our family. But by that time, you had a summer job, and we weren't sure we knew how to entertain a blue-jeaned teenager. (Looking back, it still seems like it might have been a good idea.) Then came the divorce, your mom's second marriage, and another separation. And now, what some people call a "problem pregnancy."

I wonder what thoughts fill your mind in the quiet hours of night. Are you bitter at life—just one kick in the face after another? Do you find yourself hating the boy who abandoned you, and resenting that new life inside? Or maybe, as you sense the baby stirring, you are beginning to discover "maternal instincts" that you never imagined you could feel. Perhaps, despite the circumstances, you find yourself looking forward to loving and caring for a

baby, your baby. (I wonder if way down deep, you hope that caring for your child will somehow provide a greater sense of belonging, of being needed, than you have experienced in your life so far.) What's more likely is that you're experiencing a confusing assortment of thoughts and feelings. Like that kaleidoscope your grandparents have, it's all a jumble of images that keep changing from moment to moment. As soon as you think you have the picture put together, it collapses and everything is a jumble again.

How I wish Linda and I could be there with you and your family. Not that I would try to give you a lot of advice. I suspect what you need right now is for someone to listen to you, maybe asking a few questions to help you probe your own thoughts, feelings, and fears. We would like to walk with you as you try to imagine what being a single parent might be like two years, five years, ten years from now.

And, if we could be together, I would read something to you that has meant a lot to me, especially when I've really made a mess of things and need to experience God's grace and forgiveness. But since we can't be together for awhile, Rachel, why not read it for yourself? You'll find the story in John 8:1-11. What has been especially meaningful to me is Jesus' readiness to forgive, and the possibility he offers for a new start in life.

I hope we'll be able to see you and your family by early summer. Until then, we will be thinking of you often, and remembering you and the baby in our prayers. And I'll be praying that God will bring some caring, sensitive Christians into your life, who can share God's love with you "face-to-face," like I wish we could. I hope you will let them into your life.

And please, call us or write. We would love to hear from you.

Love,
Glen and Linda

(P.S. to Visitor readers: the name has been changed, but the story is true. I have a hunch that you would not need to look far before you, too, could find a "Rachel" who needs your love and support.)

Dust and cobwebs

by Kathleen Folkerth

The Men's Fellowship was holding a clean-up/fix-up Saturday at the church. Several men took part, and a few ladies showed up to supervise; seeing as how cleaning up happened to be our profession.

While the other ladies went about working together in the classrooms, I was given the job of giving the narthex a fresh look.

What a wonderful assignment! I was blessed with the beauty of the outdoors through the glass doors and windows, and the crisp air was refreshing each time a curtain needed shaking or a window cleaned. The peace and tranquility of working alone gave me a real sense of pleasure as I concentrated on the joy of cleaning a real king's palace—the house of my Lord!

Suddenly, I was filled with amazement. Where did all this dust come from? This room never appeared dirty to me before. So much time was spent in this very room in fellowship, cobwebs unnoticed. But now, with the curtains down and light streaming in, the need for cleaning was revealed.

I thought, how often we fail to see cobwebs when we live with them daily. It's only when they're caught in the glow of a new light that they become apparent. Many times they are seen only by someone to whom the surroundings are new.

And is it not surprising that we often fail to see the cobwebs that have developed in our own lives? We never seem to see ourselves as others do—be they new acquaintances, or old ones just catching us in the glimpse of a new light.

Perhaps we should look upon our brothers and sisters in Christ as God's janitors. When someone suggests a change, or gives what appears to be criticism, could it be that our Father has caught the glimpse of a cobweb? Could it be that he has seen the need to "dust" an area of our lives that has gone unattended?

What condition would we find our prayer lives in if suddenly we were shown in a new light? Are our talents "dust free" from being used at every possible chance?

Cobwebs. So often unnoticed and yet so unsightly to the eyes that catch them. God wants us to shine for him in every corner of our lives. So when another person points out a needed change, a poor attitude, an annoying habit, or a better way of doing something, I want to think of it as a good dusting. Lord, clean me, and let me come out shining brighter because of it!

Kathleen Folkerth is a member of the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church in Englewood, Ohio.